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ABSTRACT

The basic goal of the Working Parents Project (WPP) has been to contribute to the understanding of issues arising from the relationship between work and family life. The WPP perspective pays particular attention to the ways workplace culture affects the ability of family members to participate in their children's education at home and in school. The introduction of this annual report for the period December 1983 through November 1984 provides an overview of the project and definitions of terms. Previous work and the need for continuing work are subsequently described and discussed. In addition, project goals and objectives for fiscal year 1984 are delineated, and major activities and accomplishments are described. Finally, the report briefly offers conclusions and a list of submissions made to the contracting agency. Most of the material in this report is presented in five appendixes. The appendices comprise the following: (1) "Comparison of Work and Family Life among Dual-Earner and Single Parent Families"; (2) "Involving Dual-Earner and Single Working Parent Families in the Education of Their Children: Some Recommendations for Action"; (3) "Dual-Earner, Single Working Parent Families and Education: Recommendations for School-Business collaboration"; (4) an extensive bibliography of related materials; and (5) a directory of individual and organizational resources. An executive summary concludes the document. (RH)

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ANNUAL REPORT

WORKING PARENTS PROJECT (WPP)

Division of Family, School and Community Studies (DFSCS)

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ABSTRACT

The basic focus of the Working Parents Project has been to contribute to the understanding of the issues and problems derived from the interrelationships between work, defined as paid employment outside the home, and family life, defined as the activities that various family members engage in during the course of their everyday life. Our educational perspective has resulted in paying particular attention to the ways in which the workplace culture, that is, its people, policies, and practices, affects the ability and availability of family members to become involved and participate in the education of their children, both at school and at home.

In the course of the project's work to achieve this overall goal, it has (1) synthesized major findings and recommendations from its research on dual-earner and single-parent families of elementary-aged school children; (2) developed a network of contacts with agencies, organizations, programs, and individuals in the region who have a stake in the success of working parent and single parent families and their children, and (3) developed some specific recommendations for a form of school-business collaboration derived from the research, which are designed to enhance the chances for academic and social success for children of working parents, and (4) disseminated findings and recommendations through such activities as providing presentations to local, state, and national conferences; testimony to hearings in the U.S. congress; contributions to media coverage of project work, including national newspapers, television, and wire services as well as regional television; specialized newsletters and publications; and direct mailings to almost 3,000 stakeholders in the region and the nation.

The outcomes of this Project will be useful to employers (private/public sector and schools) who have employees that are parents of school-aged children. More specifically, results of WPP efforts will increase the sensitivity of employers to the needs of working parent employees, provide direction for actions that employers can take to alleviate working parent employee needs; serve as a catalyst for increasing business-school collaboration in order to enhance working parent participation in their children's education; and expand the network and linkages, regionally and nationally, among those efforts that are attempting to serve working parents as well as their school-aged children.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Working Parents Project gratefully acknowledges the assistance received from its key contacts in the six states. They include members of our Advisory Board and the former participants in our 1983 conference.

During 1984 we have had various opportunities to interact with many colleagues, and to receive their comments and reactions to our efforts. We look forward to continuing these in the years to come.

Appreciation is also extended to Helen Axel and Dana Friedman, and to fellow members of the Work and Family Research Council of the Conference Board, Inc. for the generous assistance which made possible Renato Espinoza's participation in the November meeting of the Council in Minneapolis.

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Renato Espinoza, Ph.D.
Senior Researcher
Working Parents Project

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A. INTRODUCTION

1. Overview

The basic focus of the Working Parents Project has been to contribute to the understanding of the issues and problems which are associated with the interrelationships between work, defined as paid employment outside the home, and family life, defined as the other activities that various family members engage in at home and in their communities during the course of their everyday life. Our educational perspective has resulted in paying particular attention to the ways in which the workplace culture, that is its people, policies, and practices, affect the ability and availability of family members to become involved and participate in the education of their children, both at school and at home.

In carrying out activities related to this focus, the project has (1) conducted research with a tri-ethnic sample of dual-earner and single-parent families of elementary-age school children, (2) disseminated findings and developed some specific recommendations derived from the research which are designed to increase the chances for academic as well as social success of the children of working parents, and (3) developed a network of contacts with agencies, organizations, programs, and individuals in the SEDL region who have a stake in the success of working parent and single parent families and their children.

2. Definition of Terms Used In This Report

Throughout this report we will use some terms that sometimes are used in other contexts with slightly different meanings. The reader should keep in mind that the focus of this report and of the activities reported here is on work and family life, and in particular on how each influences the other and they in turn affect the education of children and parents' participation in that education.

In many cases, for economy's sake, we will use one term to be inclusive of others, such as "community" to stand for a range of community-based groups, agencies and organizations, including social service agencies, alternative care providers, recreation departments of city and county governments, business groups, professional or trade organizations, etc., that are relevant or that can have an impact on children's education and family life.

The specific usage of certain terms will be provided here. They are grouped into terms relating to work, family, school, community, and technical terms.

WORK We use work to mean paid employment outside the home. Unless otherwise specified, it refers to full-time, year-round regular employment, with standard daily and weekly schedules.

WORKPLACE It is used to mean the location, other than the home, where paid work is performed. It is used to refer to businesses, corporations, etc.

WORKPLACE CULTURE Workplaces are regulated by a set of policies, rules and procedures designed to accomplish the various tasks that constitute the purpose of that business. It is in that environment where interpersonal relationships take place. Different workplaces can exhibit different patterns of interpersonal relationships, hierarchies, and formal and informal, unwritten rules, values, symbols, etc. It is synonymous with "corporate culture."

LEAVE POLICIES It refers to the various types of time away from work that are allowed by a given employer. It includes paid/unpaid vacations, official holidays, sick leave, personal leave, military leave, jury leave, unpaid leave of absence, educational leave, etc.

SHORT-TERM LEAVE A special type of leave, computed in hours, of less than a day. Usually it involves the first hours of the morning, extended time in addition to the standard lunch break, or the last hours of the day. Short term leave can use accrued vacation or personal leave. Often, it is handled in a more informal fashion between worker and supervisor, and can involve paying for time off with unpaid overtime or extended hours before or after the leave is taken.

JOB It is the specific position that a worker occupies within the organization. Although jobs may have the same name in different organizations, the specific duties, standards of performance, and remuneration may vary from place to place and from person to person.

JOB SATISFACTION A subjective individual assessment about the current conditions of the job. In this study, it was the response to a direct question and the answer was recorded using a three-point scale.

WORK COMMITMENT The extent to which respondents stated that they would still work if they could get sufficient income, such as two or three times their present salary without having to work outside the home.

CAREER INVOLVEMENT A judgment made by the researchers based on the extent and intensity with which respondents reported pursuing advancement (either in position or salary), the clarity of their career plans, and the reported importance of their jobs and careers to their sense of fulfillment, self-worth, and personal identity.

WORKING PARENTS Used to encompass the more awkward phrase "dual-earner families and single (working) parent families." It refers to two-parent families where both are employed full-time outside the home, and to single-parent families where the head of the household works outside the home (as opposed to receiving public assistance).

SINGLE-PARENT FAMILIES In most cases, it refers to families in which the head of the household is the mother. The household heads can be divorced, separated, widowed or never married mothers. In this study, they are divorced women who have custody of their children.

LATCHKEY CHILDREN It is generally used to refer to children under the age of 12 who care for themselves while their parents work outside of the home. Most commonly used for absence of adult care during the after-school hours.

SCHOOLS Used as a generic term to refer to the institution, including the place, the process of instruction, and the people involved: administrators, teachers, and pupils. It can be used interchangeably with the term school districts, to indicate policies or practices that may occur in some or all schools in a given community. Most of the concerns and experiences reported in this study, as well as the recommendations proposed, are directed toward elementary schools. There is no reason, however, that similar principles could not be applicable to the higher grades, particularly junior high schools.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT (IN SCHOOL) It assesss the participation level of parents, mothers, fathers, or both, in activities such as parent-teacher conferences, school programs, plays, concerts, carnivals, field trips, class parties, PTA or PTSA meetings, fund-raising activities, etc. It also included helping the child with homework, and discussing school experiences with the child. This is similar to PIEP's "school program supporter role" within their broader definition of "parent involvement."

COMMUNITY Here it is often used to refer to the geographical and social context in which families live. In this report it is often used as a short-cut term, such as in "school-community relations," to mean a range of community-based groups, agencies, and organizations, including social service agencies, alternative care providers, recreation departments of city and county governments, business groups, professional or trade organizations, etc., that can have an impact on children's education and family life.

ALTERNATIVE CARE PROVIDERS Unless otherwise specified, it is used here to include any of the various forms of care related to age, setting, and delivery systems; such as infant, preschooler, school-age care; care in the child's home by a relative or some other adult, whether free, for a fee, barter, etc., family home care, center care; the various designations used to refer to the length of time and time of day, such as drop-in care, day care, child care, night care, sick child care, after school care, extended care, or before-and-after-school care; whether in school or elsewhere, and whether public, private non-profit, proprietary care, etc.

INTERVIEW This study relied heavily on face-to-face personal interviews. These were organized and arranged before-hand, then tape-recorded with permission of the respondents. Two types of interviews were used; first, a semi-structured, open-ended interview, explored work and family interrelationships and other aspects of family life, such as social networks, school involvement, etc.; a schedule of general questions was used at the beginning of each interview, and specific probes were used to clarify certain points or to elicit additional information.

QUESTIONNAIRE The second type is referred to as a questionnaire. More appropriately, this could be called a structured interview, since it was conducted face-to-face with participants, the questions being read by the interviewer with some questions requiring short answers. The instrument consisted of a set of questions designed to elicit specific factual information about work history, current job, family history, and child care.

B. BACKGROUND

1. Previous Work

The research phases of the Working Parents Project involved designing and executing an in-depth, mostly qualitative study of the interrelationships between work and family life among a sample of Anglo, Black, and Mexican American dual-earner and single-parent families with school-age children.

In order to explore the impact on family life of maternal full-time employment, half of the sample was composed of dual-earner families, and the other half was composed of single (divorced) working-parent families. The influence of workplace policies and practices on family life were examined by drawing half the sample from families with mothers employed by the telephone company, and the other half from families with mothers who worked for one of five large financial institutions. All families had at least one elementary school-aged child, and all the families lived and worked in Austin area businesses and their children attended Austin area schools.

The parents in each family were interviewed using both a questionnaire and an in-depth, open-ended, semi-structured interview. Data were collected on various aspects of each family's history and development, including parent work histories. Current jobs and workplaces were described by respondents mainly in the questionnaire, while the open-ended interview explored their perceptions and experiences in combining full-time employment with their family responsibilities as well as other aspects of family life.

Data from the questionnaire were coded for quantitative analyses. Data from the open-ended interviews were transcribed for qualitative analyses. Coding categories were developed and applied to the transcripts, and various categories and typologies were derived to aid in the various analyses.

In WPP's qualitative research studies, which used a small purposive sample, data collection and analysis followed each other very closely. As families were being contacted and interviewed, completed interviews were already being transcribed and studied. At the end of the data collection phase with the first sample of 15 dual-earner families (telephone company employees), a preliminary analysis effort revealed some unanticipated facts about the nature of the jobs and the workplace from which our subjects were being recruited.

It had been hypothesized in study's sample design that there would be differences in perceptions and feelings with respect to autonomy between the telephone operators (entry-level, relatively low-skilled jobs) and the service representatives (higher-skilled,

higher salaried, and more prestigious "office type" clerical jobs).

Analysis of interviews with the first 15 telephone company employees indicated a job characteristic so uniform in the workplace that there were no differences between the jobs sampled (i.e, between those of telephone operator and service representative). A rigid and broadly applied style of supervision and management resulted in little variability regarding in the feelings of job satisfaction as expressed by the women interviewed. This appeared to result from lack of autonomy and high levels of control which characterized the styles of supervision that subjects reported being practiced by their supervisors. Thus, in spite of differences in salary levels, relative prestige, and other desirable features between the jobs (e.g., work schedules, opportunities for overtime, transfers, and promotion), there were no differences in the overall satisfaction that workers experienced with their jobs.

In addition to the rigid management style and the high levels of work pressure reported by the women, the application of leave policies which did not allow for short-term leave was another perceived salient job disadvantage. In spite of these spontaneously expressed high levels of stress and dissatisfaction, the median length of service for phone company women was ten years, and the median tenure in their present jobs was six years. The job security (protected by their union), higher than average wages, and relatively good benefits, accounted for the attachment subjects showed to the labor force. Yet, when asked if they would continue working if their salary was supplied by other means, only one said yes.

In order to provide a contrast regarding workplace policies that appeared relevant to family life and parental involvement, the next data collection phase focused on families with women (mothers) who held clerical jobs in local banks. A total of three banks were used to select the sample.

The contrast in management styles and flexibility in leave policies was readily apparent. Bank women reported that their immediate supervisors had a great deal of discretion when dealing with short-term leaves. Only a few employees reported intense work pressure and this was usually related to certain banking operations which were cyclical rather than being constant.

Although most of the women interviewed reported being satisfied with their fringe benefits and salary levels (standard for the banking industry in the city) their salaries were significantly lower than those earned by telephone company women. However, overall job satisfaction was significantly higher than that reported by telephone women, indicating an apparent certain trade-off: toleration of high stress jobs if the pay and job security are above average.

The rigidity of short-term leave had been related directly to the ability and availability of many respondents to become involved in the education of their children. A measure of parental involvement was used to compare the families using the rigidity or flexibility of leave policies or practices reported by both husbands and wives. Of the 14 families who reported that both spouses were equally responsible for keeping up with their children's schools, six were phone company families and eight were bank families. All three fathers who reported having major responsibility for school involvement were married to women who reported rigid job leave policies.

When neither parent had flexible leave policies, which was the case with seven families, all phone company families, it was the wife who somehow found the time to assume responsibility for school involvement. Fourteen out of the 17 fathers who reported flexible job leave policies were involved at some level in their children's schooling. However, only two of the fathers who reported rigid leave policies were involved in their children's schooling.

Mothers, on the other hand, showed a much greater commitment to their children's education, either out of conviction or by tradition. All 11 mothers who reported flexible job leave were involved in their children's schools. In addtion, 16 of 19 mothers who reported rigid job leave policies still managed to find the time to maintain some level of school involvement.

The mother's continuing greater involvement with their children's education, even when faced with greater job pressures and constrained by rigid leave policies, points to the lingering influence of traditional sex role definitions. These have not changed even in the face of the continuous participation of these women in the labor force and their development as permanent de facto dual-earner families. Overall, we concluded that in dual-earner families where both parents work full-time overlapping schedules, rigidity in the employers' short-term leave policies tends to discourage parents' higher levels of involvement. In particular, such policies tend to discourage fathers' involvement even more than it does mothers' involvement.

Participation of fathers in family activities as well as their school involvement, was an important factor with respect to the various forms of adaptation that these families utilized in coping with the restricted time that mothers could devote to the children, household maintenance, and other traditional female role tasks.

In order to explore work and family life in families with only one parent, and considering the increasing number of households headed by women, the next and last data collection phase was designed to center on a sample of single (divorced) working parent families. To increase the comparability between the samples, methods and workplaces similar to those in the dual-earner families'

study were used. Major findings of that phase have been presented in a previous report (See Espinoza and Haron, 1983).

The general recommendations offered at the end of that phase were directed at the two social institutions whose policies and practices can directly affect the well-being of working-parent families: employers and schools.

a. Recommendations for Employers and Unions

Initially, it was stated that the power of employers is limited since employers cannot force employees to do something they prefer not to do. However, by instituting certain policies and practices an employer can facilitate or encourage parental participation in schools. They also can improve the overall atmosphere at the workplace which could help relieve some of the pressures and tensions built-in there.

(1) School Involvement Affirmative Action Policy

It was proposed that leave policies for school related needs should be studied jointly by managers and employees. An explicit statement by employers affirming the value of school involvement (e.g., similar to affirmative action statements) is one way to recognize the social importance of children and their education. Any such school involvement policy statement must be a product of the widest form of employee participation and discussion possible. It should be emphasized that policies are not only a benefit primarily for children and secondarily for parents, but also good for schools and the community.

These policies are recommended for working parents whether they are male or female, married, remarried, single, divorced or separated, with or without custody of their school children.

(2) Employer Assisted Child Care

One of the main sources of tardiness and unexcused absences among working parents, particularly mothers, is related to problems in arranging alternative care for young children while their mothers are at work. Alternative child care is a need that must be met by any family which does not have a built-in child care system, such as their mothers or other relatives residing in the household.

As with most other options subject to marketplace forces, the quality of child care is directly proportional to its cost. The problem for parents with incomes just above the poverty level is finding affordable quality care. Available alternatives such as subsidies that tend to lower the cost of quality care in places like church-sponsored day care centers, public school-based extended day care or publically funded day care centers, are often inadequate for the needs of a growing population of working mothers.

Employer supported child care, most often directed to preschool children, seldom covers the extended care of school age children. A growing number of schools and school districts are currently participating in various forms of extended care. These include making their facilities available to non-profit providers as an "in-kind" contribution, leasing their unused facilities to providers (proprietary or non-profit), and actually operating their own extended care systems. In many cases, such extended care programs are self-supported through fees collected from parents using the services.

Some forms of voucher system for child care assistance could be extended to cover school-aged children. It would allow workers to choose arrangements which best suit their preferences and needs. When offered in a "cafeteria" system of employee benefits, it could not only seerve the needs of employees but the concerns of employers as well.

(3) Employee Assistance Programs

Findings from these studies support the premise that workers cannot be perceived and treated as just one more resource (i.e., one which can be used, developed, refined, and, when no longer profitable, simply discarded). In addition to their skills and energy, workers bring to work every day a variety of hopes and concerns, aspirations and limitations, problems and possibilities. The source of these is more often the home which together with the workplace accounts for almost the all of the time and energy available to and used by working people. The extent to which psychological carry-overs from home to work are positive and energizing, productivity well as efficiency will be high. However, if such carry-overs are mostly negative, they can interfere significantly with job attitude and performance.

Two highly related and complementary approaches to deal with stress were suggested by WPP in that report. The first consists of a comprehensive examination of the workplace, its job structure and overall functioning as a social organization to minimize or eliminate those conditions which produce stress. For example, work quotas, performance standards, and deadlines can be examined--when feasible--to periodically evaluate and re-evaluate their usefulness regarding productivity and employee morale. Solutions to reduce job stress can include a redefinition of jobs, changes regarding job interdependence, increased worker autonomy, use of teams and relief workers, greater flexibility in work schedules, allocation of work loads, etc.

The most widespread source of frustration and anxiety expressed by mothers in our sample had to do with inflexible short-term leave policies. Measures must be taken to increase the flexibility of parents to attend to unexpected child-related events that often require no more than an hour or two. Frequently penalties are

imposed or workers must forego a full day's pay when all they needed was a couple of hours of leave for these kinds of events.

A second important source of frustration detected in our study, both objective and subjective (perceived), relates to personnel policies, including (1) job security, (2) opportunities for training, (3) transfers and (4) promotions. Although not all workers are equally motivated to advance into higher levels of responsibility, it is important that such opportunities be open and available to those willing to take them. In many cases, the perception concerning the unavailability of opportunities is due to a lack of information, rather than to the absence of those opportunities. The most clear need is to improve the means for internal information so that employees can be aware of opportunities open to them, and can plan according to their own personal priorities.

A second major approach to workplace improvement was also proposed based on some of the needs and concerns expressed by parents in these studies. It involves expanding the format and basic operating principles of employee assistance programs to cover services related to the mental and financial health of workers and their families. These services could include on-site education and training activities focusing on "Stress Management," "Parenting Education," and "Financial Counseling." In addition, "Information and Referral Services" can be offered to cover needs usually met by existing community based agencies and services. These include marital counseling, child abuse, legal assistance, adult education and training, and recreation services.

The types of assistance proposed here are most critical for single parents, given their relatively limited time and financial resources. They also can be of great importance to dual-earner families and parents and, in many cases, to single and/or childless workers. Thus, these are proposals that are non-discriminatory in nature and can be considered a benefit for all workers (parents and non-parents; single, divorced, widowed and remarried; male and female; young and old; management, supervisory and clerical; skilled and unskilled).

b. Recommendation for Schools

There are many ways in which parents can become involved in the education of their children. We found that most parents expressed a desire to be more involved in their children's school activities. They were particularly interested in attending activities in which their children are taking active part. These included plays, band concerts, and field trips. Unfortunately, many of these activities are scheduled during the mothers' work hours. Many workers are not allowed to leave the workplace to attend school activities because of specific policies regarding short-term leave. Young children often have difficulty understanding why their parents cannot attend

"their" activities, when other parents are there participating. These demands can cause stress in the parent-child relationships. The presence of a proud parent at such "special" school events, particularly if it is the only one they have, can be an important reinforcer to children.

Teachers also tend to equate the presence of parents at these types of events with interest and support for their classroom and the school. Unconsciously, the absence can be taken as a sign of apathy or non-interest, often reinforcing already existing misconceptions about divorced mothers and children of "broken homes."

Several suggestions can be derived from the experiences related by parents in these studies. Because of the diversity among schools and grade levels represented in our sample, these suggestions are couched in general terms, and they do not ignore the fact that some or even many schools as well as individual teachers are already implementing similar measures.

(1) Scheduling of Activities and Special Events

The most obvious suggestion is that schools should schedule more activities during parents' "after-work" hours. However, as was the case for some of the women in our sample, some people work evenings or irregular shifts. There is a need to find a balance between day, evening and weekend activities scheduled by schools. In any case, teachers should expect that some parents will not participate. A simple reminder to children about the fact that some parents are very busy, or working and unable to attend, would do much to alleviate the guilt many parents feel for not being there, as well as the disappointment or embarrassment often experienced by their children.

(2) Publicity for Upcoming School Events

Several parents stated that if they knew about upcoming events well enough in advance, time off could be requested or arrangements made with co-workers and supervisors to be away for short periods. Children are often unreliable messengers to the home for school news. A well-publicized schedule of events would undoubtedly enable more parents to anticipate as well as participate in school activities.

(3) School Involvement of Non-custodial Parents

In single-parent families (and in step-parent families as well), the custodial parent is not always the one who is most involved in children's education. Divorce and loss of custody does not necessarily eliminate non-custodial parents from children's lives. We found several instances of a clear commitment to participate. Schools, however, often ignore the non-custodial parent.

At a minimum, schools should inform non-custodial parents about their children's educational progress. Furthermore, these parents should also be advised about school events. It should be left up to parents and children to decide who can or should attend school functions. Only in extreme cases, such as when a court order applies, should schools prohibit non-custodial parents' access to information held by schools and access to contacts with school officials regarding the educational progress of their children. Such an expanded communication policy can include mailing school grades and other school information to non-custodial parents who do not reside in the same city.

(4) Homework

Although about 40 percent of the single parent families in our sample reported that sometimes other adults helped their children with homework, it appears that perhaps least 60 percent of these parents do not have any help. Homework can be a constant source of stress and tension in the family. First, it often calls for parents to continously monitor children's homework assignments and keep them away from distractions. Second, in addition to draining energy from exhausted mothers, this monitoring function often turns into an adversarial relationship. It can become a source of strain in relationships that are already restricted to just a few hours a day for working single mothers who must also manage their households. Third, many mothers are not fully prepared (educationally) to help their children with most homework assignments. Half of our sample had only a high school education.

No unequivocal solution to the homework riddle was suggested by our studies of working parents. However, the issue of homework, its nature and its purpose, is something that must be considered seriously by the education community. To the extent that it builds up and reinforces skills acquired during the school day, it may be a necessary part of education. However, educators also must recognize its potential for frustrating parents who cannot help, and children, who cannot complete assignments.

These and other changes in procedures and policies of employers, unions, schools, and other agencies can be of great importance to working parents, in particular. It would provide them greater flexibility to plan not only for the multiple demands arising from their work careers, but also those arising from child care, their children's education, and other family needs. The changes discussed here should be welcomed by other family forms, including single, childless, or those with older children since such alternatives could accommodate the families' needs for satisfying personal lives apart from their jobs and careers.

2. Need for Present Work

Near the end of 1983, the Working Parents Project convened a

working mini-conference to explore various potential sources of support for working parents identified during the project year. A cross-section of researchers, service providers, and advocates were brought together to examine the most salient concerns with dual-earner and single-parent families, and how different agencies and programs collaborate to develop and implement programs relevant to the needs of working parents whether dual-earner or single-parent families.

The conference participants were selected from each of the six states in SEDL's region. They were requested to (1) be prepared to share with other conferees information about their own efforts, (2) work towards the identification of common needs and concerns, and (3) help identify potentially successful strategies to address those needs. This also included identifying which role or roles the Working Parents Project as well as the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory could play.

Findings from research conducted in the region were presented by the Family Studies Center of The University of Oklahoma, the Regional Center for Children, Youth, and Families of The University of Texas' Center for Social Work Research, and the Working Parents Project of SEDL. Following these, participants heard presentations about programs and discussed issues and strategies for setting initiatives relevant to working parents and their children at four key institutional levels: (1) employers, (2) schools, (3) community service agencies, and (4) state-level agencies.

a. Getting Employers Involved

After presentations about employee assistance programs, a community-based non-profit child care information and referral service, and a school-based parent involvement center that does outreach to workplaces, the conferees worked in small groups to prepare a list of critical issues or concerns. The issues identified are as follows:

1) before-after school care (also called extended care),

2) summer care,

3) sick child care,

4) isolation of workers (and parents, in particular),

5) alcohol and substance abuse,

6) lack of coordination between schools and employers with regard to holidays,

7) inflexibility on the part of most employers with respect to leave policies and work schedules, often not responsive to

the needs of parents,

8) lack of information and resources for parents,

9) absence of women and sensitive people in decision-making positions, and

10) lack of awareness by employers regarding potential impact of child care difficulties and concerns at the workplace; these problems are often disguised by employees as illnesses in the absence of more flexible policies to help overcome them.

There was consensus among conferees that addressing these issues required collaboration not only of employers, but also of employees, public schools and other agencies' programs that affect the lives of families.

Among the strategies listed to approach in resolving these issues/concerns, small groups proposed the following:

1) to make sure that initiatives represent the collaboration of broad interest groups or segments,

2) that initiatives designed to influence employers be presented on their own turf, by demonstrating a particularly successful example and getting the more progressive employers to host such forums,

3) that attempts must be made by people in social service areas to reach professionals in the "human resource development" field (also known as personnel management),

4) that when approaching corporations, attention be paid to cost/benefit considerations (the bottom line),

5) that it is better to begin by <u>giving</u> (such as free noon-time seminars) before <u>asking</u> for corporate support for more comprehensive programs and changes, and

6) that the needs of any given employer are likely to be somewhat unique, so that the best approach is one of outlining options that are open for examination by all parties concerned.

Conference participants agreed that it was not only important to publicly recognize private businesses which cooperate with schools but that internal recognition by businesses regarding the contributions of individual employees to schools and other community services is also important.

Finally, conferees indicated that some programs and initiatives can be helped with a push from those in power and/or those wo have

the resources, particularly at the state and local level. A key strategy is the formation of broad based-coalitions of groups, with similar goals, to influence legislators and other elected officials. Often, that influence can be applied to specific state agencies, including Departments of Human Resources, State Alcohol and Drug Abuse agencies, etc.

b. Getting Schools Involved

After presentations about a Community Magnet School serving working parents, a comprehensive public school before and after school child care program, and an extended public school child care program run by a private, non-profit agency, the participants, working in small groups, identified these issues and suggested the following strategies:

1) The need to take into account local school preferences and district-wide policies when considering a school-based program. Some districts prefer to have more control over the programs, and some programs are the result of implementing court-ordered busing.

2) Cultivating the relationships with other child care providers, since they are not threatened by the introduction of a service that they often simply are not equipped to provide.

3) Making provisions for children to participate in related school programs, such as school breakfasts. Some programs provide breakfast with federal funding, while others do not separate their children from others in the school who are not in extended care.

4) The need to pay part of utility costs, especially air conditioning in warm areas, raises the cost of the programs. Such costs are not seen as a luxury, but rather as a necessity, since most school buildings are designed for climate control rather than natural ventilation.

5) The need to adjust fees according to the type of care that is given. Most programs have sliding fee scales for their preschool operations, and flat fees for extended care, such as morning only, afternoon only, or before and after school care.

6) The Arkansas court decision allowing schools to run after-school care programs seems to have resulted in a lowering of fees by private care providers. This would seem to indicate that they were making a pretty good profit before the school-based program was started. Thus, a school-based program not only serves its children, but it can also help other parents by keeping for-profit providers'

fees within reasonable limits.

c. Getting Communities Involved

After presentations concerning a community-based women's center, a community-based telephone reassurance program for children in self-care (latchkey), and a community-based parent education association, conferees worked in small groups to identify the following issues and concerns:

1) Schools are a critical community-level agency. However, demands for additional services from schools could be a heavy burden on an already over-committed system. There is, though, ample room for greater community and parent-school cooperation to implement programs such as after-school care.

2) The trend of shifting the burden for schoolwork assistance to parents, who in many cases either do not have the time nor the skills to perform such function. After-school care can provide a setting conducive to relieve some of the burden from parents. Other strategies include setting up telephone homework assistance services for parents.

3) Restricting schoolwork to the school day, by simply making better use of the prime time for learning during the day. There was consensus that after-school care cannot be merely a continuation of the school day, and that a break in activities should take place.

4) Volunteers, such as elderly people and older students, although important to the success of many programs, must be considered as "icing" on the cake, and not the cake itself. The burden of administering and staffing these programs rests with dependable, professional and paraprofessional paid personnel. Adequate education and training is necessary to supplement and complement a basic caring attitude.

d. Getting Support from State Level Agencies

Presenters for this session described a state-level child care advocacy organization, a state-level non-custodial fathers and mothers advocacy organization, the concerns of one State Department of Education, and the plans of a Governor's Commission on Women. A summary of the issues identified, for which solutions must come at the local level with support from statewide and regional organizations, included:

1) Training of day care professionals and paraprofessionals.

2) Needs of parents of special education children and the lack of suitable facilities for them; lack of properly trained personnel and the high cost of specialized care.

3) Training for Family Day Home Providers, most often found clustered around the schools.

4) Transportation to and from schools and day care centers.

5) Summer care.

6) Supervision for play areas and parks.

7) School and workplace barriers to parental involvement for working parents.

8) Homework; its necessity and how much time it should involve.

9) Lack of teacher and parent preparation for scheduled school conferences, and communications between home and school.

10) Lack of employer/business awareness of school activities that require presence of parents.

11) Potential resentment by single, childless or older employees about special benefits or treatment afforded to parents of young children.

This partial list of problems/issues was accompanied by a similar list of suggestions. In some cases, examples of actual programs currently being implemented to meet some of these needs are included. Among these were:

1) Training of child care personnel. In the past this training has been supported by federal funds. Cutbacks and consolidation of social programs into block grants has diminished the capacity of many states to license and enforce minimum standards for child care. An exemplary program started by Austin Families, Inc., called Quality Development, sends a child development specialist to Family Day Homes in the community and works with them in improving the quality of care, teaching activities appropriate for the children, etc. Another suggestion was to include these Family Day Home people in the training provided to the After School Care Personnel, which is financed by the schools or the programs themselves. That would be a relatively inexpensive improvement of the quality of care received by children not attending formal after-school care.

2) Parental involvement in schools. The consensus appears to be that many working parents cannot be asked to show the same level of involvement in many school activities as traditionally expected from stay-at-home mothers. However, efforts must be made to improve the opportunities for working parents to have direct communication with teachers of their children. School conferences need to be not only

better scheduled, but also structured and prepared in such a way that they inform the parents about progress and success, and do not become just another negative encounter. Some participants suggested the desirability of joint parent-child-teacher conferences, while others favored home visits. Whether or not these suggestions are reasonable, and whether or not teachers would be willing and able to do so is still an open issue.

3) Handling, by teachers, of situations of marital instability and divorce. A critical need is to take measures to avoid stigmatizing children, and the provision of special counseling to children involved in divorce or custody conflicts. These services would have the character of preventative of further disruption of the academic and social life of individual children and whole classes.

4) Schools' role in school-business cooperation. One way to increase employers' awareness of the needs of their employees who are parents is to provide businesses with information about school events through outreach activities. The willingness of schools to provide information should help counter the private sector perception that school staff only call on businesses to request money, materials, or services. This type of outreach can become a true exchange. One approach becoming popular is the Adopt-a-School concept, being implemented in various communities, including Austin. That is a system-wide program, involving pairing of schools with some of the larger businesses in the area.

5) Resistance from non-parents at the workplace to special benefits for working parents. One solution is the "cafeteria" approach to employee benefits. In this approach, individuals can select, at various times, different options with a similar total value to accommodate their current needs. Thus, young parents may opt for child care assistance, while single employees may concentrate on estate-building, or extra time to pursue educational goals, while older employees may choose retirement options.

6) Workplace policies. The implementation of policies that are important to parents, such as flexible leave policies, flexitime, job sharing, part-time employment, etc., can best be accomplished through education and the use of role models. Particularly innovative industries should be recognized and rewarded. Many employers may be moved more by competing for a favorable image than by profits alone. It also was suggested that the non-profit and public sector employers should be on the forefront of these innovations, and serve as examples to others.

7) Union and employee participation. It was recognized that participation of unions and other employee organizations, when they exist, is key to the promotion and successful implementation of these changes in workplace policies.

During a closing session, participants were asked to indicate what role or roles the Working Parents Project and the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory could play. The list included a variety of roles, ranging from research to development, evaluation to application, training, information gathering and dissemination, consultation and technical assistance. Specific suggestions included the following:

1) Perform a clearinghouse function. To gather information about programs and activities and disseminate that information to potential users in the region. The point was made that other regions of the country seem to have made great progress in a variety of areas relevant to working parents, yet, that information is not widely or easily available to local programs without national connections. In at least three different "national conferences" held recently concerning (1) single parents and the schools, (2) employer-assisted child care, and (3), after school care, very few, if any, representatives from programs in our region have been present and/or invited to participate. These national conferences have been held in the East or Northeast, and have drawn their participants from the surrounding areas. The south and southwest are clearly underserved when it comes to access to first-hand information about innovative programs and activities.

2) Provide neutral expert testimony. Oftentimes there is a need to provide research documentation about programs, policies, regulations, or legislation proposed. That is a function that could be undertaken by a non-profit, "neutral" organization such as SEDL.

3) Provide evaluation services to programs and agencies that are too small to have their own evaluation teams.

4) Provide consultation services to various school systems and help them set up after-school care programs.

5) Provide consultation services to school systems in other related areas concerning working parents and single-parent families.

6) Extend consultation assistance and collaborative relationships to other agencies and organizations, including non-educational organizations, such as voluntary and service organizations, businesses and corporations, employee groups and unions.

7) Facilitate access to research data bases necessary for program development by practitioners not familiar with recent, relevant research.

8) Facilitate the exchange of experiences within the region among organizations in various states by serving as anchor to a network of programs, agencies, organizations and individuals concerned with working parents and their families.

9) Develop materials, including "how to" manuals to assist practitioners in the development of programs and activities supportive of working parents and single parents.

10) Work with state education agency officials to increase their awareness about the needs of working parents and single-parent families.

11) Assist in forming networks and coalitions at the local, state and regional levels to help with programs, legislation, appropriations and other forms of public policy which are supportive of working parents.

After providing these encompassing mandates to the Working Parents Project, conferees agreed that the list more so constitutes a "wish" list, and that some things can be done sooner or easier than others. There was agreement that a first order of business was to determine what is out there (i.e, what is happening with programs relevant to working parents and single parents). Thus, priority should be given to information gathering, dissemination, and network-building. Those activities would increase the capacity of the Project in providing consultation and technical assistance to others in the region.

The general and specific feedback received by the WPP staff from this excellent cross-section of regional stakeholders served to refine and specify the content of the activities necessary to meet the goals and objectives for the FY 1984 work. These goals, objectives, and specific activities had been written over a year and a half before, and, thus, were approximations, anticipated in the absence of research findings and feedback from a wider range of regional stakeholders.

The goals and objectives for 1984, as stated in the proposal written in mid-1982, lacked specificity. Thus, in the planning of specific activities that were to be undertaken in 1984, the WPP examined the general recommendations offered in the 1983 Final Report.

The general area of child care for preschool children, especially infants and efforts to get employer-assisted child care initiatives, was being served well by several national and some

state organizations. Although child care was identified by WPP research as a major concern of working parents, it is not an educational issue, or at least one not likely to be solved through the schools.

Addressing income, promotion, advancement, and other related workplace issues, along with other sources of stress and pressure experienced by working parents, was judged beyond the competency of a primarily education-oriented agency. Besides, most of those issues, although experienced with greater intensity by working parents, also affect single and childless workers.

This synthesis and refinement of the suggestions led WPP staff to concentrate upon those issues that affected working parents most directly: (1) the need for quality after school care for their elementary school children, and (2) the need to identify then remove institutional barriers to the involvement of working parents in the education of their children. At the time of WPP's 1983 conference, participants identified after school care programs provided in the school buildings to serve elementary school-aged children as the ideal way to meet the needs of working parents for care that provides safety, is affordable, and allows for access to tutoring services, creative, and recreational activities.

With representatives of two highly successful programs present at the conference along with their encouragement for WPP to become involved in this area, led to further exploration of this issue by staff. This exploration led to contacts with a well-developed, comprehensive project having national projections.

The School-Age Child Care Project (SACC), part of the Center for Research on Women at Wellesley College in Massachusetts, was started in 1979. Since then, the SACC has developed into a national information and technical assistance resource. They have conducted research on the issue and have developed materials to assist in the implementation of after school care programs. These include a comprehensive manual, a report on policy issues relevant to after school care, and a manual directed to public school administrators addressing some legal considerations related to such programs.

As it often happens with "national" projects, their influence and coverage diminishes proportionally to the geographical distance from that center. Although the Austin Extend-a-Care, Inc. is featured as one of the models in the SACC Action Manual, and the SACC staff is available for consultation and training, we found some programs within the region that were not aware of the fine examples in operation elsewhere in their own states as well as within other close by states in the region, a clear indication of their relative isolation.

While invited to present WPP findings and recommendations at a conference sponsored by SACC, we explored possible collaborative

arrangements with SACC. Given their status as a national resource, they expressed no great interest in collaboration with WPP especially with respect to establishing WPP as a regional branch. They were interested, however, in WPP providing information about their products and services as well as making referral of inquiries from the region to the SACC center.

After school care continues to be perceived by many school administrators as a non-educational, marginal issue. As such, its potential for delivering safety, tutoring, and enrichment to elementary school children is not widely recognized. Reluctantly, WPP has maintained a secondary interest in and along with an awareness about the current status and development of after school care in schools as a working parents issue. WPP believes that there is great potential for these types of programs to provide an avenue for business involvement, and more generally, community-wide collaboration efforts on behalf of working parents and their children.

In addition to WPP's secondary interest in after school care for elementary school children, the project has concentrated its efforts on formulating a type of school-business collaboration designed to address some of the needs detected in its research with dual-earner and single-parent families. It incorporates components of programs in operation elsewhere in the region and the nation.

The WPP's strategy is to combine in one multi-part, flexible package called Employer-Assisted Parent Involvement in Schools (ESPIS), several components of various programs. These components are designed to meet needs of dual-earner and single parents as identified in our research. Some other components proposed were identified with the help of colleagues from the region who participated in our September 1983 conference. Other components were identified through information obtained from local projects within our region in addition to projects in other states and other national-level efforts. The search for these additional sources of information has been an integral part of our 1984 activities.

The original goals and objectives, offered in mid-1982, are presented in the following section. The description of the activities that follow reports on how these goals and objectives were met in the course of the Working Parents Project work during FY 1984.

C. PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR FY 1984

These were the original goals and objectives proposed for 1984. They have guided the work during this year and will be used to organize the report that follows for easy reference.

1. Goals and Objectives

a. Goal 1

To translate project research findings into practical recommendations for policies, strategies/guidelines, and programs that families, schools, employers, and other agencies can utilize to increase the capabilities of working parents for participating in the education and care of their children.

Objective 1
To synthesize project findings along with other related research on working families' role in children's education as well as research concerning innovative programs focused on linking working families, schools, and employers.

Objective 2
To identify specific groups, networks, agencies, and organizations within the region that can benefit directly from dissemination of information about project findings, syntheses, and recommendations.

Objective 3
To develop a variety of approaches for presenting project findings and recommendations to schools, employers, and parents.

b. Goal 2

To assist agencies, institutions, organizations, and individuals concerned with enhancing the collaboration between schools, employers, and working parents, by providing up-to-date information about innovative approaches in the area of work, education, and working parents.

Objective 1
To develop and then maintain an up-to-date information base recording research, programs, agencies, and individuals having an active focus on activities that encourage support for and enhance the participation of working parents in the education of their children.

Objective 2
To develop project capabilities for assisting local and state education agencies, human service organizations, and places of employment in the development of programs, policies, and

procedures designed to enable fuller working parents' participation in the education of their children.

Objective 3
To implement the information dissemination plan through one or more alternative methods.

2. Key Staff

The key staff and their responsibilities are:

a. Renato Espinoza, Ph.D., Senior Researcher, performed the overall supervision of project activities, with particular attention to networking and contacts with regional and national stakeholders.

b. Nancy Naron, M.A., Research Associate, performed a full range of project activities, with particular attention to data analysis and synthesis of research findings.

c. Sylvia Lewis, Administrative Secretary (half-time), performed various duties, including word processing, correspondence, and input and maintenance of the magnetic disk files.

In addition to the regular project staff, assistance was rendered at various times by other staff of the Division of Family, School, and Community Studies, and by other SEDL staff, in particular the Office of Institutional Communications.

D. MAJOR ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

This section of the final report contains a description of major activities, products, and accomplishments to date. Some of the activities described here are either a continuation or a further development of activities that were a minor part of the work performed during the research phases of the project. This report, then, describes the current status of these activities, as well as specific activities and accomplishments that have taken place during FY84.

The organization of this section of the report follows the sequence of goal and objectives presented in the previous section, with the emphasis described in Section D. 2., "Need for Present Work." In order to improve the flow and readability of this report, documents produced in the course of the work will be described here and presented in their full form as appendices. The same will be true with databases that have been developed and maintained during this phase. A certain amount of repetition is unavoidable, since certain activities, such as the development of databases, serve more than one goal and meet more than one objective.

1. Goal 1. Translating Research Into Practical Recommendations

Three separate objectives had been proposed. The activities, products, and outcomes relating to these objectives are described next.

a. Objective 1. To Synthesize the Various Phases of Research and Other Related Research.

This objective was met by the development of a document that contains comparisons of the data gathered from the dual-earner sample and data gathered from the single-parent families. To compare the findings from the two studies, similar typologies were derived and classifications were made. The two samples were then compared in terms of several employment-related and family-related factors and appropriate statistical analyses were performed. The report also incorporates findings from others' research. In addition, this document contains recommendations directed toward school administrators and personnel, employers, business associations and community groups. This report is titled "Comparisons of Work and Family Life Among Dual-earner and Single-parent Families" and is presented as Appendix A.

b. Objective 2. To Identify Stakeholders Within the Region Who Could Benefit From our Work

The activities performed to meet this objective are a continuation of the networking activities that were initiated during 1983.

One set of stakeholders is relatively easy to identify, although hard to reach. These are the school superintendents that head local education agencies (LEAs) in all six states. We secured an up-to-date mailing list to reach the almost 2,500 LEAs in the region. In addition, we have access to up-to-date education directories from all six states. These directories vary in the amount and type of information they contain. The common elements are the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of top administrators in the central offices and in the various compuses. Some contain information about current enrollment, the number of teachers, etc.

A second set of stakeholders, non-school community organizations and agencies, proved more difficult to secure. The WPP files have been developed and maintained up to date with the assistance of our Advisory Board members, through personal contacts of staff in conferences and professional meetings, and from reference books and other sources. These databases are maintained in the form of an electronic file stored in magnetic disks residing in our word processing equipment.

These files have been created to contain a record of the names of programs, agencies, organizations, and individuals identified as potential stakeholders in the success of dual-earner and single-parent families. There are separate files for each of the six states of the SEDL region, and a selective file on stakeholders from other states and national organizations and agencies.

For each item in the electronic file there is a corresponding manila folder that contains a record of contacts, information, and materials from and/or about that particular organization or individual. The electronic file, used mostly as a mailing list generator, is updated periodically. The materials in the folders, on the other hand, are constantly being updated since they contain a variety of materials, including notes on telephone conversations, personal contacts made while attending meetings, contacts made while visiting or being visited by other professionals or practitioners, and copies and notes on any correspondence exchanged, actions taken, etc.

In addition to the files for states and national contacts, there is a special file containing lists of participants and/or presenters to various professional conferences, meetings, and other functions where Project staff have participated. These lists are used to identify additional contacts in the various states of the region.

Each state file is classified into three major categories: (a) Working Parents Project Key Contacts, (b) Agencies, Organizations, and Programs, and (c) Individuals.

(a) Working Parents Project Key Contacts.

These are individuals who have an already established working relationship with the Working Parents Project. They include members or past members of SEDL's Board of Directors, members of the Family, School and Community Studies Division's Advisory Board, and participants in a working conference held by the Working Parents Project in September of 1983. These individuals have contributed considerable time and effort to provide guidance and feedback to project staff, to suggest areas of needs in their respective states, and in general, to assist with project activities. These include assisting staff identify additional contacts, secure updated materials, and make referrals to individuals and agencies in their respective states and within the professional organizations of which they are members.

(b) Agencies, Organizations, and Programs.

This file contains those institutional stakeholders with whom the project has corresponded or who have been suggested by other contacts as a potentially useful or interested stakeholder. In this category, only those schools or school districts in which a direct personal or telephone contact has been made are included. The listing does not include the list of 2,500 school superintendents who were sent a copy of the Executive Summary of the 1983 research findings and recommendations.

The relative large size of the National Contacts file is due to the considerable interest that has been generated at the national level by the Working Parents Project. The section detailing dissemination activities lists the various meetings and presentations made by project staff during 1984.

With the exception of the Local Education Agencies, no attempt has been made until now to further classify the various institutional contacts because of their relative small numbers. The specific organizations and agencies included vary from state to state, since most are really local rather than state-level entities. Efforts have been made to include organizations and agencies in large as well as medium and small cities in the various states. Texas has about half of the total school population and about half of all school districts in the region. That, in addition to the proximity of many state agencies and organizations with headquarters in Austin, our home base, explains the relatively larger size of the Texas file.

(c) Individuals.

This file contains the names of individual researchers or practitioners who have requested information or materials about the project; this includes of some university faculty members and others.

c. Objective 3. To Develop a Variety of Approaches for Presenting Project Findings and Recommendations to Various Stakeholder Groups

This objective has been met by the development of three major documents designed for dissemination purposes. The first one is in the form of the Testimony that the Working Parents Project presented at the Hearing of the Prevention Strategies Task Force of the House Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families. It was held Washington, D.C. on June 7, 1984. The document, entitled "Involving Deal-earner and Single Working Parent Families in the Education of Their Children: Some Recommendations for Actio[illegible]ummarizes selected findings from our previous research, and presents our general recommendations to schools and employers. In that document, the basic strategy of our "Employer-Assisted Parental Involvement in Schools" program, (ESPIS) is developed. The text of the Testimony is scheduled for publication by the House Select Committee in December of 1984. Only a limited number of copies of the document submitted were distributed. The Testimony is presented as Appendix B.

The second document, entitled "Dual-earner, Single Working Parent Families and Education: Recommendations for School-Business Collaboration," contains a more refined description of our proposed strategy for increasing the involvement of working parents in the education of their children. This document has been disseminated to about 200 selected community organizations, including business organizations and other social service providers in large, medium and small cities throughout the six states. This document is presented as Appendix C.

Finally, a comprehensive summary of the major findings, including some additional analyses, and the general and specific recommendations offered by the project are contained in the document described under Objective 1, and it is presented here as Appendix A. In addition to these documents, WPP staff has tailored the basic findings and recommendations for presentations to a variety of audiences, both in the region and in national forums. Detail of these dissemination activities and audiences are presented in the discussion of Goal 2, Objective 3.

2. Goal 2. To Assist Other Agencies, Institutions, and Organizations to Enhance Collaborative Efforts

Three separate objectives were envisioned to meet this goal. The activities, products, and outcomes are described in the following paragraphs.

a. Objective 1. To Develop and Maintain an Up-To-Date Database Regarding Research and Programs Directed to Working Parents

In order to meet this objective, it was necessary for the

project to acquire and store for its internal use not only research literature, but also information about agencies, organizations, programs and individuals engaged in activities relevant to the success of dual-earner and single-parent families and their children. The databases developed include not only information and contacts with stakeholders in the six states of the SEDL region, but also contacts with other organizations and agencies in the other states and many others more national in scope. In addition to these databases, the staff has collected clippings from local newspapers as indications of interest and concerns present in the Austin community.

The materials and information collected has been organized as follows:

(1) Research Reports, Books and Other Documents File

The project's materials acquisition effort has been supplemented with many materials obtained at no cost from various governmental sources, foundations, exchange of materials with other projects, displays at special interest professional meetings attended by staff, and the private subscriptions of staff to relevant professional journals. Additional sources of materials include the SEDL library, other SEDL projects, and the Texas Education Agency's Project C.I.T.E. (Coordinating Information for Texas Educators). Project staff also have secured individual courtesy borrowers' cards in order to gain access to the University of Texas' Perry-Castaneda Library.

The Reference list, included as Appendix D, is contained as an electronic file on a magnetic disk. It has been classified, using internal codes, into the following major categories:

Business-School Collaboration
Children and Work
Demographic Data and Analyses
Employment
Family Relations
Gender Roles
Home-School Interrelationships
Job Satisfaction and Involvement
Maternal Employment (effects of)
Research Methods
Work and Family

Within these categories, there are specific sub-headings that further define the contents of individual items. Multiple listings are avoided by the use of a sub-category "General" under each major category. The word-processing technology used allows for some limited manipulation of this list using the internal codes. It is possible to reorder items alphabetically by code, as well as add new codes, recode existing items, combine codes, etc.

Although notes have been made about many of these documents, they are most often contained in index cards used to generate the list of references, since producing annotated bibliographies or references has not been a goal of the project. These materials and files are intended for internal reference use only.

(2) Books, Reports, and Other Documents

Not all items listed in the references file are physically available within the premises. Those materials that are actually available on the premises have been classified and stored in five different sets according to their physical characteristics:

(a) Books. Includes both hardback and paperback books. They are stored in cabinets in alphabetical order according to author. The WPP collection currently contains over 70 volumes.

(b) Documents and Reports. This set includes soft-bound, spiral-bound, and other non-standard items held in manila folders, and arranged alphabetically by title, since many of them have only institutional authors. The WPP report collection currently holds over 100 titles.

(c) Small Documents. This set includes documents in the popular small format, roughly five-by-eight inches, and normally less than 30 pages long. They are arranged alphabetically by author. There are currently over 30 titles.

(d) Papers. This set consists of paper reprints, separates, or photocopies. They are held in manila folders in tub-file type cabinets, arranged alphabetically by author. There are currently over 300 items, including papers, xerox copies of chapters and sections of books and reports, and miscellaneous items.

(e) Professional Journals. These are stored by date in a separate cabinet. There are over 85 issues of various journals; most of these are staff's personal copies.

(f) Newspaper Clippings. These, mostly obtained from the newspapers that staff read in their homes, are cut and pasted, and then circulated for information and on some occasions to follow up a contact or request for information, materials, or publications. After routing and whatever action is called for, clippings are filed in simple chronological order. The unclassified clippings file contains over 300 items, an average accumulation of about five per week for the last two years.

(3) Files of Agencies, Programs, and Individuals

These files have already been described as the WPP network under Goal 1, Objective 2.

b. Objective 2. To Develop Project's Capability to Serve As A Resource to Stakeholders in The Region

In order to meet this objective, the WPP collected, read, and made notes about the materials that were acquired, either through purchase, personal subscription to professional journal, or materials obtained from the State Library, City Library, and from the University of Texas Perry-Castaneda Library.

In addition to these readings, the WPP staff participated in the following organized activities:

(1) In-house Staff Development Workshop

During 1984, staff attended an in-house two-day workshop on "Improving Communications Skills." Presented by an outside professional consulting firm, the workshop was designed to diagnose each individual's communications strategies, to review oral presentation styles, and to provide feedback and teach oral communication skills and concepts.

(2) Conference Participation

Project staff members participated in numerous conferences and meetings, in the great majority of cases in the dual roles of presenters and participants/conferees. The complete list of those is reported elsewhere in the section on dissemination activities. Here, four major meetings of national scope, two by professional organizations and two invitational meetings of national scope, are mentioned, because although the staff were not formal presenters, they were either active participants or had been invited to serve as a resource. Both professional association conferences included pre-conference workshops, seminars, and sessions on topics of specific project interest as well as general professional development in such areas as methodology, theory, policy issues, etc.

(a) The 1984 Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), held in New Orleans, Louisiana in April.

(b) The 1984 Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association (ASA), held in San Antonio, Texas, in September.

(c) Renato Espinoza, the Senior Researcher of the Working Parents Project, was elected to the Work and Family Research Council of the Conference Board, Inc. of New York. The Work and Family Research Council is an interdisciplinary group of

professionals, from the business community and other organizations, that will meet on a periodic basis in order to explore aspects of work/family issues of particular concern to the members. The Council will function as an integral part of the Conference Board's Work and Family Information Center, a national clearinghouse created in July of 1983 with funds from the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the Atlantic Richfield Foundation. The second meeting of the Council was hosted by the Honeywell Corporation, and held in Minneapolis, Minnesota in October.

(d) Renato Espinoza was invited by the Center for Early Adolescence of the University of North Carolina, with support from the Johnson Foundation, to an invitational, working conference at the Wingspread Conference Center, home base of the Johnson Foundation in Racine, Wisconsin. The conference, with the title "3:00 to 6:00 p.m.: Setting Policy for Young Adolescents in the After-School Hours," was held November 11-13, 1984.

(3) Project Consultants and Other Resources

During the course of 1984, the Working Parents Project has identified the following individuals as outside consultants and resources that would be available to assist with project activities.

(a) ARKANSAS

(1) Glenda Bean, Child Care Specialist, Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families, Little Rock.

(2) Mary Bryant, Executive Director, The Parent Center, Little Rock.

(3) Jerry Flanzer, Graduate School of Social Work, University of Arkansas at Little Rock.

(4) John Miller, Department of Sociology, University of Arkansas at Little Rock.

(5) Betty Pagan, Professor of Child Care Management, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.

(6) Juanita Sanford, Henderson State University, Arkadelphia.

(b) LOUISIANA

(1) Juliana Boudreaux, Associate Superintendent, New Orleans Parish Schools, New Orleans.

(2) Joe Carlisle, Louisiana State University, Shreveport.

(3) Judy Moon, Louisiana State Department of Education, Baton Rouge.

(4) Nancy Torczon, Director, Program ADEPT, New Orleans Parish Schools, New Orleans.

(5) Karen Soniat, Louisiana State Department of Education, Baton Rouge.

(c) MISSISSIPPI

(1) Ralph Brewer, Mississippi State Department of Education, Jacksonville.

(2) Gary Hansen, University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg.

(3) Swinton Hill, Jackson Public Schools, Jackson.

(4) Joseph Pete, Jackson Public Schools, Jackson.

(5) J. Gipson Wells, Mississippi State University, Mississippi State.

(d) NEW MEXICO

(1) Roger Krogh, New Mexico State University, Albuquerque.

(2) John Mondragon, Albuquerque Public Schools, Albuquerque.

(3) Harriet Otteni, Parent Involvement Center, Albuquerque Public Schools, Albuquerque.

(4) Hugh Prather, Albuquerque Public Schools, Albuquerque.

(5) Vita Scavedra, Longfellow Community School, Albuquerque.

(e) OKLAHOMA

(1) Sharon Clark, Coalition for Parenting Programs, Tulsa.

(2) David Fournier, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater.

(3) Beulah Hirschlein, Family Studies Center, University of Oklahoma, Stillwater.

(4) Ann Lowrance, Women's Center, Norman.

(5) Betty Wilson Jacob, Idabel.

(f) TEXAS

(1) Rosalie Anderson, Center for Social Work Research, The University of Texas at Austin.

(2) Martin Arocena, Researcher, Office of Research and Evaluation, Austin Independent School District, Austin.

(3) Evangelina Barron, Parental Involvement Specialist, Austin Independent School District, Austin.

(4) Rose Brewer, Assistant Professor, Sociology Department, The University of Texas at Austin.

(5) Gloria Contreras, Assistant Professor, College of Education, The University of Texas at Austin.

(6) Norvell Glenn, Professor of Sociology, Department of Sociology, The University of Texas at Austin.

(7) Terry Gilius, Director, Austin Families, Inc., Austin.

(8) Rose Lancaster, Executive Director, Austin Extend-a-Care, Inc., Austin.

(9) Michael Lauderdale, Director, Center for Research on Social Work, The University of Texas at Austin.

(10) Dick Stanford, Executive Director, Employee Assistance Programs of Texas, Austin.

(11) Nancy Voigt Wedemeyer, Associate Professor, Department of Home Economics, The University of Texas at Austin.

c. Objective 3. Conduct Dissemination Activities

The dissemination of our research findings and recommendations has been the central activity of this period. The major activities can be classified in terms of their format and major target audiences.

Three major documents have been prepared and used for this dissemination function, and they have been used either as handouts at meetings and presentations or in direct mailings, either initiated by the project, or as a response to inquiries and requests for information. These are (1) "Work and Family Life Among Anglo, Black, and Mexican American Single Parent Families: Executive Summary of the Working Parents Project 1983 Final Report," (2) "Involving Dual-earner and Single-parent Families in the Education of Their Children: Some Recommendations for Action," Testimony presented at the hearing of the Prevention Strategies Task Force of

the Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families on "Improving American Education: Roles for Parents," held in Washington, D.C. on June 7, 1984 and scheduled for publication in December, 1984, and (3) "Dual-earner and Single-parent Families and Education: Some Recommendations for School-Business Collaboration."

The specific dissemination events include:

(a) General Mass Dissemination:

- Write-up in Americal Family, Vol. VII, No. 2, February 1984.
- Article in USA Today, April 26, 1984 issue, by Sally Stewart.
- Mention on the NBC Nightly News, national network broadcast, April 26, 1984.
- Article in The Washington Post, April 27, 1984 issue, by Judy Mann.
- Write-up in Education Daily, April 27, p. 4.
- Write-up in Education USA, May 7, 1984.
- Article in School-Age Child Care Newsletter, Vol. 2, No. 2, Fall of 1984.
- Nancy Naron was featured co-interviewee on Focus on Education, half-an-hour television program broadcast to South Texas Coast region, Station KRIS, Corpus Christi, November 16, 1984.

(b) Conference Presentations:

The following presentations were made by WPP staff. The information provided here includes dates, title of presentation, name of conference or forum, city and state where it was held, and types of participants or target audiences reached directly.

- April 5, 1984. "Divorced Working Mothers' Involvement in the Education of their School-age Children: The Role of Ex-spousal Support and the Mother's Social Support Network." 1984 Annual Conference of the Texas Council on Family Relations, Abilene, Texas. Participants included marriage counselors, family therapists, community family service providers, researchers, and students, mostly from Texas, but including some from New Mexico and Oklahoma.
- April 27, 1984. "Working Parents Project: Findings and Recommendations." National Conference on "Working Parents

and Achieving Children: The Road to Excellence." Home School Institute, Washington, D.C. Participants included a national cross-section of educators and educational researchers, family professions, program administrators, legislative staff, Department of Education staff, parents, students, advocates, and members of the press, both local to Washington, D.C., national press, and national education press services.

- May 17, 1984. "Work and Family Research: Implications for Latchkey Children." When School's Out and Nobody's Home: The First National Conference on Latchkey Children, Boston, Massachusetts. Participants included a national cross-section of researchers, program developers, representatives of the business sector, legislators and legislative staff, educators, parents, and students.

- June 7, 1984. "Involving Dual-earner and Single Working Parent Families in the Education of their Children: Some Recommendations for Action." Hearing of the Prevention Strategies Task Force of the House Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families, Washington, D.C. Participants providing testimony, in addition to the Working Parents Project, included a cross-section of researchers, program developers, educators, parents and children from six states and the District of Columbia, in addition to the legislators, legislative staff, and members of the national press.

- July 16, 1984. "Working Parents, their Employers, and the Schools: Some Strategies for Mutual Collaboration." At "Texas Public Schools--A Rising Tide of Excellence." 1984 Superintendent's Workshop for Educational Leaders, Austin, Texas. Participants included school superintendents, other central office staff, and teachers from Texas.

- July 30, 1984. "Involving Working Parents in the Schools: Some Barriers in the Workplace, the School, and the Community." At Parents, Teachers, and Administrators Teaming for Excellence Conference, Ruston, Louisiana. Participants included State Department of Education staff, university researchers, teachers, administrators, and parents from Louisiana.

- August 26, 1984. "Workplaces, Schools, and Families: Studies of Parents' Participation in the Education of their Children." The Society for the Study of Social Problems 34th Annual Meeting, San Antonio, Texas. Participants included a national cross-section of sociologists and other social scientists, along with program developers and educators.

- October 19, 1984. "Policies and Program Developments Affecting the Work/Family Balance: Helping New Era Families Cope." National Council on Family Relations Annual Meeting, San Francisco, California. Participants included a national cross-section of researchers, marriage counselors, family therapists, social workers, community family service providers, family life educators, parent education specialists, educators and students of various disciplines.

(c) Targeted Dissemination-Regional Audiences

In addition to the activities mentioned above, two major direct mail activities have been undertaken during this year:

1) Direct mailing of "Work and Family Life among Anglo, Black, and Mexican American Single-Parent Families: Executive Summary of the Working Parents Project 1983 Annual Report" to over 2,500 District Superintendents in each of the six states of the SEDL region, and

2) Direct mailing of "Dual-earner and Single Parent Families and Education: Some Recommendations for School-Business Collaboration," mailed to approximately 200 business and community organizations and agencies in various cities throughout the six states of the SEDL region.

E. CONCLUSIONS

In the course of the work performed during FY84, the stated goals for the project have been met. Three separate documents have been developed and used to serve various needs of the project's dissemination activities during 1984.

The reactions of various audiences to our research findings indicate that our attention to the workplace and its culture is an important contribution to our knowledge of the complex social interactions in which adults engage. Furthermore, our general recommendations for changes in school and workplace practices and policies to accommodate the special needs of working parents, single parents, and their children, are indeed timely.

Congressional hearings and national conferences have been held during this year dealing with working parents and their children, with the latchkey problem, and with after-school care and supervision of early adolescents. In all of these national forums our project has been present and visible. A great deal of interest has been expressed about our work, and in particular to our suggestion that employers can play a vital role in supporting and facilitating the involvement of parents in the education of their own children. This appears to be a truly original and timely contribution to the search for additional ways to improve both children's education and to achieve the empowerment of parents.

It is clear now that we need to go beyond the general recommendations offered. The path chosen has been articulated in our proposal for a new form of business-school collaboration: the Employer-Supported Parental Involvement in Schools (ESPIS). This strategy has been formulated in its essential elements and shared with a cross-section of school districts and community organizations, in particular chambers of commerce in cities of various sizes. Our efforts for FY85 will be directed at promoting the implementation of ESPIS by one or more school districts, and to use information obtained from that experience to develop detailed "how-to guides" to help implement the model in other locations around the region.

This activity would complete the full cycle that started with research, continued with development, implementation, refinement, and finally would lead to a product--an educational innovation that can be exported, adopted and/or adapted to fit the particular circumstances of a given community.

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F. LIST OF DELIVERABLES AND OTHER PRODUCTS

As a result of project activities, the following list of items represents the deliverables to be forwarded to NIE:

1. Three quarterly progress reports due February 29, 1984, May 31, 1984, and August 31, 1984 (two copies each). These have already been delivered as contracted.

2. One Final Report of project work due November 30, 1984 (ten copies). This is the Final Report.

3. Two copies of the overall project's executive summary, covering research, dissemination, and assistance activities (No due date; submitted under separate cover).

APPENDICES

A. Comparisons of Work and Family Life Among Dual-earner and Single Parent Families

B. Involving Dual-earner and Single Working Parent Families in the Education of Their Children: Some Recommendations for Action

C. Dual-earner, Single Working Parent Families and Education: Recommendations for School-Business Collaboration

D. Working Parents Project Bibliography

E. Directory of Contacts

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APPENDIX A

COMPARISONS OF WORK AND FAMILY LIFE AMONG DUAL-EARNER AND SINGLE-PARENT FAMILIES

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Working Parents Project
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A. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Working Parents Project (WPP) has been to determine how parents' work lives and home lives interact to effect parents' participation in the care and education of their children. In 1981 and 1982, WPP conducted a study of 30 dua;-earner families and, in 1983, a study of 30 single-parent families. Both studies were primarily qualitative in nature and included one semi-structured, in-depth interview and one structured, short-answer interview with each parent. One-third of the families were Anglo-American, one-third were Black and one-third were Mexican American. All families had at least one elementary school-aged child living in the home.

Interviews covered the following topic areas: Parents' Work Histories, Current Job/Work Policies, Social Relations at Work, Family Finances, Family-School Relations, Home Management/Task Allocation, Family-Work Interrelatedness, Family Images and Relationships, Family Activities, Family Communication, Parental Self-Assessment, and Aspirations and Plans for the Children.

The mothers in these studies were employed full time outside the home at either of two types of workplaces: banks or the local telephone company. They were employed in non-supervisory, non-management level clerical jobs. The two types of employers differed significantly with regard to employee satisfaction, job stress, salaries, employee autonomy, and management style according to the women interviewed. Overall, telephone company jobs were reported as yielding little satisfaction for the worker, affording little autonomy and as producing great stress under a rigid, highly structured management. However, the telephone company jobs paid approximately twice the average salary of clerical workers in the banks. The bank jobs were typically reported as being more satisfying to the worker, not as stressful, and under a much more flexible management.

Interviews were conducted face-to-face in the respondent's home or at the offices of SEDL. They yielded approximately four hours of tape-recorded data per family. In the study of dual-earner families, both mothers and fathers were interviewed. In the study

of single-parent families, only the mothers were interviewed. The tape recorded interviews were then transcribed on word processing equipment and stored magnetically. Transcripts were examined to uncover themes related to work and family interrelationships as well as how these affected parental involvement in children's education. Once themes emerged from examination of the data, researchers devised coding categories, coded the transcripts and then proceeded to identify typologies. These typologies, in turn, were examined for interrelationships and further broken down to yield work-related, family-related, and school-related variables.

When the study of dual-earner families was completed in 1982, a summary of the findings was produced (Mason and Espinoza, 1982). Upon completion of the 1983 study of single-parent families, another report was produced (Espinoza and Naron, 1983) which presented findings related to work and family interrelationships and their effects upon parental involvement in their children's education. Recommendations were presented for schools, employers and community groups.

The findings discussed in this report are based on additional analyses and comparisons using data collected from the 30 dual-earner families and that collected from the 30 single-parent families. The findings addressed are restricted to those concerning the relationships between the mothers' attitudes and behaviors associated with employment and family functioning, and how these factors are, in turn, related to parental involvement in school as well as parents' plans for their children's futures. Similarities and differences between the dual-earner families and divorced (single-parent) families will be made with regard to the variables described in Section C.

B. SAMPLE DESCRIPTION

The total sample for the studies of dual-earner and single-parent families consisted of 60 families, 20 Anglo-American, 20 Black and 20 Mexican American families who had at least one elementary school-aged child. The demographic characteristics of the two family forms are presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Demographic Characteristics

	Married Families	Divorced Families
	Mean	Mean
Mother's Age	32.0	31.8
Years Married	11.07	6.7
Years Divorced		5.1
Number of Children	2.3	1.7
Age of Oldest Child	10.6	10.2
Age of Youngest Child	6.0	7.6
Years with Employer	10.6	4.7
Education	12.3	13.1

The only noteworthy differences in demographic characteristics between the married families and the divorced families are the length of time the mother had been employed by her current employer, the number of children in the family and the mother's educational level. Many of the divorced women changed jobs at the time of their divorce, either because they moved to another city or in order to secure a higher income. The divorced women had slightly fewer children on average and had attained a slightly higher level of education. Three of the married women had college degrees (one a master's) and four of the divorced women had college degrees (one a master's).

Twelve of the married families had three or more children whereas only two of the divorced women had three or more children. The number of children in a family certainly affects the amount of time parents have to care for and educate each child. Even though married parents have a larger number of children, on average, in this sample, there are two adults to share the responsibilities for overseeing their children's activities. Therefore, it cannot be said that in this sample one family form has more or less time for an individual child. However, all of these differences between the two groups should be kept in mind while reading the findings.

C. OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF VARIABLES

Work Commitment - was determined by asking a single question, "What would you do if you were given two or three times your present income?" Prompts of "Would you continue to work?" and "Why?" or

"Why not?" were sometimes used. Work Commitment, in this study, is a measure of women's desire to work outside the home.

Career Involvement - was based on reports of past and current behavior and expressed attitudes with regard to employment. It is defined as the intensity with which the women appeared to have been pursuing advancement (higher position and/or higher salary), the clarity of their future career plans, and the apparent importance of their careers to their sense of self-fulfillment, self-worth and identity. All of these factors were assessed to determine the women's levels of Career Involvement.

Job Satisfaction - was assessed by asking the women how much satisfaction their current jobs bring them.

Employers - for this study, were the two types of businesses for which the respondents worked: banks and a telephone company.

Family Type - refers to the type of family organization and nature of parent-child relationships. For dual-earner families the fathers' roles were included in the derivation of family types. Determination of family type for single-parent families excluded the fathers' involvement in family life. Determination of family type included assessment of such factors as quality and frequency of communication among family members, degree of parental control, level of conflict, children's and parents' contributions to household management, degree of and joint participation in recreational activities.

Preschooler - defined as the presence or absence in the family of children below kindergarten age.

School Involvement - refers to the extent to which the parents attended or participated in the following activities: (1) parent-teacher conferences, (2) school programs such as plays, concerts, and carnivals, (3) field trips, (4) class parties, (5) PTA meetings, (6) fund-raising activities, (7) helping with homework, and (8) discussions of the child's school experiences with the child and others.

Short-term Leave - refers to a special type of leave, computed in hours, of less than a day. Short-term leave can be accrued vacation or personal leave. Often, it is handled in a more informal fashion between worker and supervisor and can involve paying for time off with unpaid overtime before or after the leave is taken.

D. WORK AND FAMILY INTERRELATIONSHIPS: COMPARISONS OF DUAL-EARNER AND SINGLE PARENT FAMILIES

1. Work Commitment

Women in both samples were clearly identifiable with regard to

their levels of interest and involvement in their work lives and their commitment to the role of worker. The findings related to these work-related variables, which include Work Commitment, Job Satisfaction, Employer and Career Involvement, will be addressed first. Next their relationships to family life variables are discussed.

Work Commitment is a term which has been used by researchers to mean many things, and its measurement has involved attitudes, intentions and behaviors (Safilios-Rothschild, 1971). In this study, Work Commitment represents a woman's stated desire to work outside the home even if she does not need the income. It can be viewed as a measure of attitude toward the worker role, a measure of how important being employed is to a person's satisfaction with life. Three categories of Work Commitment were distinguished. Of the total sample of mothers, 35% expressed a definite desire to work, 13% said they might work part-time or at home, and 52% stated they would not work if they could be provided their desired income without working.

Women who definitely wanted to work reported a variety of reasons in explanation of why they would prefer to work outside the home (most women seemed to feel it was necessary to explain why they wanted to work and did so without the interviewer asking). The reasons mentioned ranged from "I'd probably go crazy--I've always worked" to "it (working) makes me a more interesting person" to "...as long as I got limbs and God's still giving me the strength, I'm gonna work until the very last day if I can help it; I just love to work." Some of the women appeared motivated to work by their desire to spend time with other adults or to be part of an organization. Others appeared to want to maintain a sense of independence and control. For many, their work appeared to be a valuable source of self esteem as it provided them with a sense of accomplishment and purpose. Others simply wanted to avoid the boredom that can come with spending the majority of their time at home.

Divorced mothers were somewhat more likely than married women to indicate a preference for working instead of not working, given the choice. Of the divorced women, 40% (12) would definitely continue working, 10% (3) might work part-time, and 50% (15) would not work. In contrast, 30% (7) of the married women would continue to work, 17% (5) might work and 53% (16) would not work. Married and divorced mothers did not differ significantly as groups in terms of Work Commitment (chi square = 0.29, df = 1, $p>.05$; responses of "might work" were treated as "would not work" responses for the chi square analysis).

Although married and divorced mothers appear to have similar levels of commitment to the work role, it became apparent that different factors may be related to their levels of work commitment. In comparing Work Commitment between bank employees and

phone company employees, it is clear that type of employer is related to the married mothers' degree of work commitment while the type of employer seems to have no bearing upon the divorced mothers' work commitment.

The data presented in Table 2 indicate that Work Commitment differed significantly for married women employed by banks and those employed by the telephone company (chi square = 5.71, df = 1, p = .02), with the bank employees expesssing the greatest work commitment. In contrast, type of employer was not found to be related to degree of work commitment expressed by divorced women (chi square = 0.00, df = 1, p = 1.0).

Table 2
Work Commitment by Employer

Married				Divorced			
Work Commitment	Bank	Phone	Total	Work Commitment	Bank	Phone	Total
Would Work	8	1	9	Would Work	6	6	12
Would Not/ Might Work	7	14	21	Would Not/ Might Work	9	9	18
	15	15	30		15	15	30
Chi Square = 5.71, df = 1, p = .02				Chi square = 0.00, df = 1, p = 1.0			

It appears that the desire to work outside the home is tied to current working conditions and job satisfaction for married mothers but not for divorced mothers. Married and divorced mothers alike reported their jobs with the telephone company to be very stressful and generally lacking in satisfying experiences. Telephone company employees were less satisfied with their employment than women employed by banks regardless of marital status (chi square = 3.35, df = 1, p<.10). Primarily, the stress associated with meeting quotas and being continually monitored by supervisors was reported to be responsible for their dislike for their jobs. The following statements were commonplace among telephone company employees.

> It's too stressful, the financial rewards aren't worth it...this job isn't emotionally rewarding. The only emotional reward I'd say I get out of this job is knowing that I'm taking care of my family...I don't feel the sense of accomplishment, although I'm very accomplished on the job and I'm always like in the top ten, and there's like 65 reps (service representatives). So I'm always getting recognition at month's end. But that's not enough for me, you know. I don't feel like I've advanced enough. And I'm not satisfied

with the job (divorced mother of two, age 32, seven years with telephone company).

When one married woman was asked why she remained with the telephone company, she explained:

> They get you where they want you and you can't (quit)...They pay you so much money and your benefits are so good, that you usually are in debt...And then you can't really afford to quit and go someplace. A lot of other places couldn't pay that much, like small businesses.

Many of the telephone company employees seem to remain with the company because their educational levels do not allow them to pursue other employment that pays as well. In addition, jobs of interest in this study, particularly the service representative and operator jobs, do not require job holders to learn or use skills which are readily transferable to other jobs with employers that pay as well as the telephone company.

The stress and lack of satisfaction associated with telephone company employment seems to explain partially the degree of Work Commitment expressed by married women. However, it may not simply be current stress and/or dissatisfaction that explains the lack of work commitment on the part of married phone company employees as they reported working an average of 9.2 years with the phone company. Even though most married phone company employees stated that they would not work given the choice, most had demonstrated an unusual attachment to the labor force, with few breaks in employment other than short-term (6 months or less) leaves to give birth. Many of these women had spent all or the majority of their work careers with the phone company and really had no other work experiences with which to compare their current jobs. Therefore, the work role may not have acquired the positive associations necessary to develop a commitment to the role. Conversely, the divorced women had worked an average of 6.2 years with the phone company and many of them had spent considerable time with other employers.

As shown in Table 3, reported satisfaction with current job is related to Work Commitment for married mothers but not for divorced mothers. The married mothers who are satisfied with their present jobs are more likely to be committed to the work role than those who are not satisfied with their jobs.

Table 3
Work Commitment by Job Satisfaction

Married				Divorced			
Work Commitment	Job Satisfaction High	Low	Total	Work Commitment	Job Satisfaction High	Low	Total
Would Work	6	3	9	Would Work	7	5	12
Would Not/ Might Work	7	14	21	Would Not/ Might Work	12	6	18
	13	17	30		19	11	30

Chi Square = 2.85, df = 1, $p<.10$ Chi square = 0.22, df = 1, $p>.10$

This finding further supports the notion that current work experiences are not as relevant for divorced mothers' attitudes toward the role of worker as they are for married mothers'. [Marital status was found to be unrelated to job satisfaction; both married and divorced mothers reported similar levels of job satisfaction (chi square=1.21, df=1, $p>.10$).]

In addition, the relatively high income enjoyed by telephone company employees may have offset the negative aspects of the telephone company jobs for divorced women. The divorced women had considerably lower family incomes and their standards of living were much more dependent on their personal earned incomes. It appears that divorced women experience the work role as providing economic independence to a greater degree than married women. Further, it is this sense of independence and control that appears to account partly for the divorced phone company employees' greater work commitment.

As one divorced mother expressed it,

> "I like to work. I'm very independent, and I don't want anything handed to me. I would not just stay at home and polish my toenails or my fingernails and watch a bunch of soap operas" (Black divorced mother, age 27, two sons ages 8 and 9 years).

Another stated,

> "Seeing results from what I've done and having the money to spend because of what I've done, you know, being able to buy this or buy that. . . it makes me feel good about myself." (Anglo divorced mother, age 32, two daughters ages 10 and 14 years).

Work Commitment and Family Life

In comparing those mothers who revealed a high commitment to the work role with those who did not express much commitment, it became clear that the nature of the family relationships was related to mothers' attitudes toward employment. Family organizations were found to follow patterns that can be described as distinct family types. These patterns of interaction included such factors as quality and frequency of communication among family members; degree of parental control over children's behavior; level of conflict between family members; children's and parents' contributions to household management; and degree of joint participation in recreational activities. The family types found for married families and divorced families are briefly described below.

a. Married Family Types

1) Togetherness Families are those in which the respondents described themselves as close families and mentioned that both parents and children participate jointly in a majority of recreational and housework activities. These families had low inter-member conflict, and the parents were satisfied with the degree of control they maintained in the family.

2) Child-Centered Families are those families in which the parents' relationships with their children were judged to be of greater significance to family life and cohesion than the marital relationship.

3) Conflict Families are those which are characterized by major conflicts between parents, and sometimes children, over issues such as task sharing, amount of time each parent spends with family, and whether a mother should be working outside the home.

4) Transition Families are those in which a major alteration in both spouses' views of family roles or relationships was occuring at the time of the interviews. Several of these families had had major conflicts in the past, and in order to resolve them had sought outside help or support. The planned changes in these families were invariably in the direction of more egalitarian task sharing by parents.

5) Absent Father Families are those in which the fathers were virtually absent from most of family activities, either because of extra jobs, greater involvement in their jobs, or simply social/emotional isolation from other family members. In some of these families, the father's absence and lack of family involvement appeared to be accepted whereas in others it was a continual source of conflict.

b. Divorced Family Types

1) Authoritative Mother Families are those in which the mother exercises firm authority but without great concern for strict adherence to rules. The family members have good communication and share many household and recreational activities.

2) Authoritarian Mother Families are characterized by mothers who maintain rigid control over the children resulting in very few long-standing conflicts. The mother and children participate in a few joint activities and the mother has a distinctly separate life from that shared with her children. The communication in these families is satisfactory in the mother's view yet it is not very intimate.

3) Inadequate Mother Families are those in which mothers report dissatisfaction with communication between themselves and the children and themselves. Usually they stated that the children do not confide in them, and that they feel their parenting skills are inadequate. These families are also characterized by minor discipline problems associated with undue anxiety and guilt on the mother's part. The mother and children share many activities together yet the mother expresses guilt over the lack of time she devotes to her children.

4) No Control Mother Families are those whose relationships are filled with open conflicts. The children appear to be rebelling against the mother's authority and communication is generally poor. The mother is usually trying to have her own separate social life, but this is being met with great resistance on the part of their children.

5) Dependent Mother Families are those in which the mother relies very heavily upon the children for assistance in managing the household and in making decisions. The mother and oldest child are typically confidants and have very close, two-way communication. There are very few interpersonal conflicts in these families.

Of all the married family types, Togetherness Families appeared to have the greatest family cohesion and support, and the fewest conflicts. Among the divorced family types, the Authoritative Mother and Authoritarian Mother Families appear to have the most supportive and conflict-free interchanges. Half of the married families are best described as Togetherness Families. The Authoritative Mother Family Type is the most frequent type found among the divorced families. The frequencies for Family Type are presented in Table 4.

Table 4
Family Type Frequencies

Married	Frequency	Relative Frequency
Togetherness	15	50%
Child-Centered	3	10%
Conflict	4	13%
Transition	4	13%
Absent Father	4	13%
	30	100%
Divorced		
Authoritative Mother	11	37%
Authoritarian Mother	5	17%
Inadequate Mother	6	20%
No Control Mother	5	17%
Dependent Mother	3	10%
	30	100%

Family Type was found to be closely related to the mother's degree of Work Commitment. In those families reporting cooperation, sharing of tasks and few conflicts, the mothers were more likely to express a desire to work outside the home. See Table 5 for a breakdown of Work Commitment by Family Type.

Table 5
Work Commitment by Family Type

Family Type	Would Work	Would Not/ Might Work
Married		
Togetherness	8 (53%)	7 (47%)
Child-Centered	0 (0%)	3 (100%)
Conflict	1 (25%)	3 (75%)
Transition	0 (0%)	4 (100%)
Absent Father	0 (0%)	4 (100%)
	9	21
Divorced		
Authoritative Mother	5 (45%)	6 (55%)
Authoritarian Mother	4 (80%)	1 (20%)
Inadequate Mother	1 (17%)	5 (83%)
No Control Mother	2 (40%)	3 (60%)
Dependent Mother	0 (0%)	3 (100%)
	12	18

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As shown in Table 5, families which have the least conflict between family members also have mothers who reveal more of a commitment to the work role. Among the married families, eight of the nine mothers (89%) who desire to work outside the home are in families described as Togetherness Families. It should be noted that of the remaining six Togetherness Families in which the mothers do not want to work, four (67%) are employed by the telephone company. Likewise, the divorced mothers who are experiencing relatively conflict-free relationships with their children are more likely to express a higher level of Work Commitment. Of the 12 divorced mothers who want to work outside the home, nine (75%) are described as either Authoritative mothers or Authoritarian mothers. Both report fewer discipline problems and greater control in the family than do the other mothers. Lack of open conflict is one aspect of family relationships that seems to be associated with mothers' commitment to working (sample size was not adequate to assess these relationships statistically).

c. Career Involvement and Family Life.

While analyzing the coded work-related data it became clear that although Work Commitment may be a worthwhile measure of a woman's attitude toward the work role, other behaviors and attitudes related to working were important in understanding work and family interrelationships. Another variable which provided more insight into these interrelationships is Career Involvement. Levels of Career Involvement were determined by analyzing mothers' reports of past and current work behavior as well as their attitudes. Those women who appeared to be investing a relatively greater amount of energy toward their success in the work role and those whose work seemed relatively more important to their sense of worth, were rated as having a high level of Career Involvement. Marital status does not appear to be related to level of Career Involvement, as nearly equal numbers of married and divorced mothers revealed high career involvement (5 and 7, respectively), moderate involvement (14 and 13) and low career involvement (11 and 10).

Nearly half of the mothers who indicated that they would continue working even if provided with their desired income did not reveal a high level of career involvement as determined from their reported behavior. This finding indicates that nearly half of the mothers who are committed to the work role are motivated to work for reasons other than the desire to succeed in the work world. For many of these mothers, it appears that social relationships with other adults, escape from routine domestic chores or the sense of independence discussed earlier account for their commitment to the work role.

Not only is desire to work outside the home, or Work Commitment, associated with Family Type, but the actual behaviors which suggest true career involvement, such as advancement to higher positions and preparation for future career moves and/or education, are also found

to be associated with Family Type. Those mothers, married or divorced, in families characterized by little interpersonal conflict are more likely to reveal high levels of involvement in their careers (see Table 6).

Table 6
Career Involvement by Family Type

	Married					Divorced			
	Career Involvement					Career Involvement			
	Low	Moderate	High	%High		Low	Moderate	High	%High
Togetherness	4	6	5	33%	Authoritative Mother	5	4	2	18%
Child-Centered	1	2	0	0%	Authoritarian Mother	1	0	4	80%
Conflict	2	2	0	0%	Inadequate Mother	1	5	0	0%
Transition	2	2	0	0%	No Control Mother	1	3	1	20%
Absent Father	2	2	0	0%	Dependent Mother	2	1	0	0%

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It appears that good family functioning is even more critical for actual career-oriented behaviors than it is for attitudes toward the work role. The married mothers whose families are supportive by sharing responsibility for household tasks and whose families are not engaged in numerous conflicts appear to have the time and energy needed to actively pursue advancement in their careers.

For divorced mothers, it appears that the mother's degree of control over children's behavior is a critical component of the mother-child relationship in terms of its relationship to career involvement. Those divorced mothers who have rigid rules for their children's behavior (authoritarian mothers) appear better able to devote the time necessary to develop and execute a career plan. Most of the divorced mothers in Authoritarian Mother families were working full-time in very stressful jobs (telephone company employees) and were also pursuing further education or holding a second job.

Another family factor related to Work Commitment and Career Involvement is whether there is one or more preschool-aged child in the family. Several national surveys have found that women are less likely to work when they have preschool-aged children. Predictably, married women in this study were less likely to reveal a commitment to the work role or a desire to be employed outside the home when they had preschoolers (see Table 7). However, for divorced women, the desire to work did not appear to be affected by the ages of their children (see Table 7). Divorced mothers with preschool-aged children were as likely to indicate that they would continue working given the choice as were those who do not have preschool-aged children (the small number of mothers in this sample with preschool-aged children prevents testing this relationship statistically).

Table 7
Mothers with Preschoolers and Work Commitment

Work Commitment	Divorced	Married
Would Work	5	3
Would Not/ Might Work	5	12
	10	15

As stated earlier, all but one (89%) of the married women with high Work Commitment are in Togetherness Families and six of these eight (75%) do not have preschoolers. Likewise, nine of the 12 divorced mothers who expressed a commitment to the work role are in families experiencing little conflict (Authoritative and Authoritarian Mother families). However, fewer (56%) of these

these mothers do not have preschoolers.

Although the ages of children in the family do not appear to be related to the divorced mothers' desire to work, whether a divorced mother has a preschool-aged child does seem to affect her level of Career Involvement. In fact, married and divorced mothers reveal similar curtailments in career involvement when they have a preschool-aged child in the home. Analysis of variance regarding the level of Career Involvement revealed a significant main effect for the variable Preschooler ($F=5.08$, $df=1$, $p = .03$), but not for Marital Status. In addition, the interaction between Preschooler and Marital Status was not significant (see Table 8).

Table 8
Career Involvement by Marital Status and Preschooler
Analysis of Variance Source Table

Source	D.F.	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F Ratio	F Prob.
Marital Status	1	0.013	0.013	0.025	0.87
Preschooler	1	2.541	2.541	5.079	0.03
Interaction	2	0.942	0.942	1.883	0.18
Within Groups	56	28.017	0.500		
Total	59	31.650			

It seems that married women with preschool-aged children are operating under different norms than are divorced women with preschool-aged children, as divorced women's attitudes toward working (Work Commitment) reveal that having a preschool-aged child is not related to their desire to work. Yet, married mothers report that they would prefer not to work outside the home more often when they have a preschool-aged child than when they do not. It seems that in the recent past it has become more and more acceptable for women with children to work outside the home as long as they do not have preschool-aged children. These cultural ideals do not appear to affect divorced mothers' attitudes to the same extent they affect married mothers' attitudes since divorced women are as likely to prefer to work when they have preschool-aged children as when they do not.

However, the actual behaviors associated with career advancement, such as working overtime, pursuing higher positions and more education, are related to having a preschool-aged child for married and divorced mothers. While having a preschool-aged child may not affect a divorced mother's attitude toward the work role, it does appear to affect negatively the amount of time and energy she actually devotes to that role.

c. Working Mothers and School Involvement

School Involvement represents a parent's participation in school programs, helping with homework and discussing school events with the children. In the study of dual-earner families, the level of School Involvement was assessed for each parent. In the study of single-parent families, it was determined for both the custodial mother and the non-custodial father.

Among dual-earner families, both parents were involved in their children's schooling in 47% (14) of the families, in 43% (13) of the families the mother took primary responsibility for school involvement, and, in 10% (3) of the families the father took primary responsibility for attending to school-related activities. Among the single-parent families the mother was the parent most involved in children's school activities in all but one family. Only 17% (5) of the divorced parents shared the responsibility for participating in their children's schooling.

Despite the relative lack of involvement on the part of non-custodial fathers, it appears that single parents provide parental participation in their children's schooling equivalent to that experienced by children in dual-earner families. See Table 9 for a presentation of frequencies of levels of parental school involvement.

Table 9
Parental School Involvement Frequencies

	Married		Divorced	
School Involvement	Freq.	Rel. Freq.	Freq.	Rel. Freq.
Low	10	33%	6	20%
Medium	10	33%	14	47%
High	8	27%	10	33%
Unknown	2	7%	—	—
	30	100%	30	100%

In the remainder of this discussion of how parents' work lives are related to their involvement in their children's education, the focus will be on mothers' school involvement since few non-custodial fathers were found to participate actively and mothers either shared equally in or provided the majority of school participation in most of the dual-earner families.

Two of the work-related variables discussed in relation to Family Type, namely Work Commitment and Employer, and Marital Status and Preschooler were examined in relation to Mother's School Involvement. As shown in Table 10, analysis of variance for Mother's school Involvement did not reveal any significant main effects for these variables. However, a significant interaction was found between the variables Work Commitment and Preschooler.

Table 10
Mother's School Involvement by Work Commitment, Preschooler, Marital Status and Employer

Analysis of Variance Source Table

Source	D.F.	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F.Ratio	F.Prob.
Main Effects	4	1.978	0.494	0.945	0.45
Work Commitment	1	0.003	0.003	0.005	0.94
Preschooler	1	0.973	1.973	1.858	0.18
Marital Status	1	0.621	0.621	1.186	0.28
Employer	1	0.146	0.146	0.280	0.60
Interactions	6	5,988	0.998	1.906	0.10
Work Commitment by Preschooler	1	3,257	3.257	6.221	0.02**
Work Commitment by Marital Status	1	0.010	0.010	0.019	0.89
Work Commitment by Employer	1	0.937	0.937	1.790	0.19
Preschooler by Marital Status	1	0.373	0.373	0.712	0.40
Preschooler by Employer	1	0.108	0.108	0.207	0.65
Marital Status by Employer	1	0.795	0.795	1.519	0.22
Within Groups	47	24.603	0.523		
Total	57	32.569			

**Significant interaction

Closer examination of the relationships between Work Commitment, Preschooler and School Involvement revealed that having high Work Commitment and having a Preschooler in the home is related to low levels of school involvement. None of the mothers, married or divorced, were found to have a high level of school involvement if they both desired to be employed outside the home and had a preschool-aged child. In contrast, 46% (6 of 13) of the mothers with a high level of Work Commitment and no preschool-aged child were found to be highly involved in their children's schooling. For women who do not want to work, having a preschooler was not found to be related to level of school involvement (See Table 11).

Table 11
Breakdown of Mother's School Involvement by Work Commitment and Preschooler

School Involvement	High Work Commitment		Low Work Commitment	
	Have Preschooler	No Preschooler	Have Preschooler	No Preschooler
Low	8	3	5	6
Medium	2	4	6	11
High	0	6	4	6
Column Totals	8	13	15	23
% High	0%	46%	27%	26%

Being committed to the work role in addition to having a preschool-aged child seems to cut into mothers' time to the extent that maintaining a high level of involvement in children's school activities is difficult. Mothers committed to the work role were more likely to be actively pursuing career goals by attending college at night or by holding a second job. (None of the married mothers had a second job, thus no comparisons can be made between divorced mothers and married mothers with regard to the effects of "moonlighting" on their school involvement.) This finding can be explained in terms of the direct impact on the mother's time. The divorced mothers with low levels of school involvement were much more likely to have additional part-time employment; 67% (5 of 7) of the mothers with low school involvement were engaged in additional part-time employment, 14% (2 of 14) of the mothers with a medium level of involvement had additional employment, and none of the mothers with a high level of school involvement were working in addition to their regular employment.

The divorced women with low levels of school involvement tended to have rather high career ambitions and low job satisfaction, and were without the means to realize their ambitions unless they had additional part-time employment which would either allow them to save money for further education or to become self-employed. It cannot be said of the divorced mothers with low school involvement that they do not regard their children's education as important. Rather, it appears that their energies are focused on achieving a higher level of employment and standard of living.

Another work factor found to be related to parental involvement in school is availability of short-term leave, which can be used to attend to family-related concerns. The two types of employers differed considerably with regard to policies for short-term leave. No married telephone company employees, interviewed during 1981 and 1982, reported that they could take brief periods of time from work. However of the divorced women employed by the telephone company, interviewed during 1983 after new policies had been initiated to allow for more flexibility in taking leave time, approximately half reported that they had short-term leave available. Most bank employees (87%) also reported that short-term leave was available for attending to family-related needs.

It appears that flexibility in taking short-term leave is associated with a higher level of school involvement for married women, but not for divorced women. Of the married women, 67% (4 of 6) with high levels of school involvement reported flexible leave policies and only 25% (3 of 12) of those with low levels of school involvement reported that they could easily take short-term leave. However, the picture for divorced women is quite different. In fact, all of the divorced women with low levels of school involvement reported having flexibility for taking short-term leave. It seems that divorced women reserve their leave time for minor emergencies such as children's illnesses, transportation problems and child care problems since there is no other adult in the home with whom to share these responsibilities.

Nearly all divorced women in the sample stated that their jobs interfered with their participation in school activities. They indicated that they "can't ask for time off" or are "too busy at work" to attend school functions during work hours, even though their employers provide for short periods of leave time for such personal needs. Evidently there is an unwritten policy within the banks and a more clearly stated policy at the telephone company which inhibits women from leaving their jobs to attend to non-emergency events, such as school functions. Additionally, the relationships individual bank employees have with their immediate supervisors appear to determine what constitutes an acceptable reason for taking short-term leaves. Some of the bank employees apparently feel free to request time off from their supervisors to attend school functions while others do not.

Though the variable School Involvement provides a quantified measure of parental involvement in school, other anecdotal information contained in the transcripts provides a more sensitive depiction of parents' attitudes toward their children's education. In addition to assessing levels of school involvement, parents' aspirations and plans for their children's futures were investigated through questions such as "What would you like for your children when they grow up?" and "What are you or they doing now to prepare them for that future?"

In comparing data from divorced mothers and married mothers, it was evident that divorced mothers are somewhat more concerned about their children's ability to obtain fulfulling and well-paying employment than are married mothers. These concerns may account for their diligence in overseeing their children's education. Most married couples described hopes for their children's futures in general terms and the hopes were typically couched in terms of their children's happiness and satisfaction with life. On the other hand, divorced mothers were more likely to have discussed career goals with their children and were more adamant that their children pursue post-secondary education. The following quotes portray the seriousness with which many divorced mothers, particularly those highly involved in their careers, approach their children's education and futures.

As one divorced mother explained it,

> Ive always wanted my kids to be the best. I want them to be top of the list. I want them to outride any of my sisters' and brothers' kids. I do. And that way, when I stand firm by myself after they just got up and they done been there and they're receiving some kind of award, and they won't be able to say the son of Mr. and Mrs., they'd be able to say the son of (mother), all by herself (Black mother of two sons, ages 8 and 9 years).

It seems that some mothers are determined that their single-parent status will not result in any missed opportunities or disadvantages for their children.

Another divorced mother stated,

> we (mother and ex-spouse) are gonna send them through college. We want to make sure they get degrees. . . I'm gonna insist that they go to college. . . I don't see how they're gonna get around that, not living with me (Black mother of one daughter, age 7 and one son, age 3).

Higher education seemed particularly important to many divorced mothers and several had very high aspirations for their children

even though most of them had no more than a high school education. For example, when one divorced mother was asked what she would like for her daughter when she grows up, she responded immediately with,

> "I want to be able to see her walk down with the Ph.D. . . The main thing that I tell her is that education comes first. You get your degree; you get your Ph.D. before you even start thinking about marriage" (Mexican American mother of one daughter, age 11, who is attending a private school).

This is not to imply that the parents from the dual-earner sample did not express desires for their children to pursue post-secondary education. However, the divorced mothers appeared to want to insure that their children could be self-sufficient and successful, and most felt education was the key to a life of economic independence that they have learned to value highly.

E. SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

In this study of work and family life among dual-earner and single-pareEnt families, it was found that working parents who are involved in their careers and value their worker roles tend to have smoothly functioning home lives. Whether the family was divorced or intact, the employed mothers reported a desire to work outside the home more often when they shared in household responsibilities and engaged in joint recreational activities with other family members. Other research has also shown that satisfying home lives and satisfying work lives tend to occur together (Safilios-Rothschild, 1971).

A study by Davis (1982) suggests that "togetherness," sharing of recreational and housekeeping activities, is more important to working families than to traditional families with an employed father and stay-home mother. According to this study, the at-nome mothers and children spend so much time together that what they strive for is separate activities. Most of the employed parents in the Davis (1982) study reported that achieving the degree of desired family togetherness was not a problem while the children were in their preadolescent years. However, when children reached their teens they became more interested in spending time with their own friends than with family members.

The findings from the Davis (1982) study also suggest that working parents (specifically those in dual-earner and single-parent families) feel guilty about the little time available to spend with their children; thus, they stress the importance of family togetherness. In the Working Parents Project's study of dual-earner families, many mothers expressed of guilt about the lack of time they had to spend with their children because of their full-time jobs. Divorced women, however, expressed less guilt about the

amount of time their jobs required as their employment was critical to family survival. Mothers from both family forms stressed the importance of family cohesion, and their concerns seemed related to beliefs that they did not spend enough time with their children. However, the divorced women did not express guilt, only concern.

In a study of how women's jobs are related to family adjustment it was found that for women in low status jobs "positive job mood" was positively associated with family adjustment. This suggests that there is a carryover of positive mood (or negative mood) from the workplace to the home (Piotrkowski & Crits-Christoph, 1982). The findings for women with high status jobs were the reverse: highly positive job mood was associated with dissatisfaction with family relations. The authors suggest that for women in high status jobs, job satisfaction is related to the level of job involvement in such a way that their absorption in satisfying work detracts from their family life. Therefore, findings of the present study which suggest that women who are satisfied with their family lives are more involved in their careers and more committed to the work role may reflect the relatively low status of their jobs.

For divorced women, another employment factor was central to the understanding of their work commitment: the sense of independence derived from earning an adequate income. Family income is believed by many prominent family researchers to be the most important determinant of child development and functioning (Kamerman & Hayes, 1982), which is particularly obvious for low income minority groups. Though family income did not appear to be related to the nature of family relationships in the present study, the range of incomes was limited and, thus, its effects were difficult to assess. However, among the divorced women, many sacrifices were made in an attempt to secure a greater income; recall that 47% of the divorced women employed by banks held a second job. It seemed clear that these women did not wish to have a greater income primarily to raise their personal standard of living. Rather, it was needed to provide their children with material things as well as opportunities to achieve future financial success and personal fulfillment.

Higher income has also been found to be associated with a greater sense of fate control for divorced women (Boulé, 1977). In addition, divorced mothers' employment reduces their stress because it provides social contacts and support (Heatherington, Cox & Cox, 1979). The level of the occupation in which the mother is engaged has also been reported to affect the divorced mothers' children's functioning as well as their own. The higher the rank of the mother's occupation, the fewer behavior problems her children tend to exhibit (Nelson, 1981).

The heightened sense of fate control that comes with increased income may explain the divorced telephone company women's greater commitment to the work role despite their dislike for their jobs

as they are paid well given the level of education and skill required. Many of the divorced women stressed the importance of being and feeling independent, particularly economically independent. This need to feel independent seemed to account for much of their desire to work.

The married women's commitment to working seemed to be tied to their satisfaction with their current jobs which has been found to be generally true for all workers. This finding seems logical and makes the findings for the divorced women particularly interesting. Their levels of work commitment were not related to their levels of current job satisfaction. It appears that the desire to work outside the home is related to job satisfaction for married women and to a sense of economic independence for divorced women.

Married women are also more likely than divorced women to view child-rearing as their primary role in the family. Even with the changes in attitude toward women generated by the women's liberation movement, many married women continue to view their earnings as supplementing the husband's income. Their income is not necessarily crucial, rather only needed to maintain a higher standard of living. The freedom of choosing to work prevents many women (their husbands as well) from viewing their jobs with the same level of respect that their husband's work is typically accorded. In addition, the wife's typically lower income reduces the status of her employment regardless of its occupational level. Therefore, it is understandable that married women do not want to work unless the work is enjoyable.

Work does not seem to have the same meaning for married women and divorced women. Divorced women must work, and most of them are the primary, if not sole, providers for their children. This evidently gives divorced women an additional sense of accomplishment as they view themselves as both workers and providers. In addition, divorced women have typically undergone a decrease in standard of living upon divorce (Brandwein, Brown & Fox, 1974; Duncan, 1975). Consequently, their attitudes may change with regard to the importance of being able to earn a sufficient income as opposed to having a sufficient income. This appears to be true for divorced women in the current study as many expressed a strong desire to provide for themselves, and some preferred no financial assistance.

Not only do divorced women have a need to be self-suffient and economically independent, they attempt to instill these values in their children. Other research has shown that married and divorced working mothers tend to teach their children to be independent at earlier ages than do non-working mothers (Hoffman & Nye, 1974). However, it seems that divorced working mothers are even more concerned that their children learn to provide for themselves and their families. Divorced mothers are also more likely to teach their daughters, as well as sons, the importance of being able to

provide for themselves and their families.

Divorced mothers' emphasis on independence partly explains their greater concern for their children's educational attainment seen in the present study. Most divorced mothers viewed higher education as the route to economic independence. Therefore, they were more adamant than the married mothers that their children pursue a college degree. Those divorced mothers who exhibited a high level of work commitment and a high level of career involvement were even more likely to encourage their children, sons and daughters, to study hard and prepare for college.

The divorced mothers' greater concern for their children's educational attainment was not clearly evident in their level of participation in their children's school activities. The mothers who were most ambitious for themselves and their children had the least time to devote to school activities as many of them were pursuing more education or were holding a second job. From this, it can be concluded that a mother's lack of participation in school functions cannot be interpreted to mean that she is not concerned about her children's academic success, and this is particularly true for divorced mothers. In addition, many of the mothers who reported high levels of school involvement seemed to be motivated to be involved by their desire to nurture their children as opposed to help them succeed academically. That is, many mothers seemed to view school involvement as simply another aspect of being a "good" and loving parent.

F. GENERAL AND SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations offered here are directed at the two social institutions whose policies and practices can directly affect the well-being of working-parent families: employers and schools.

1. General Recommendations for Employers and Unions

First, we acknowledge that the power of employers is limited since employers cannot force employees to do something they prefer not to do. However, by instituting certain policies and practices an employer can facilitate or encourage parental participation in schools. They also can improve the overall atmosphere at the workplace which could help relieve some of the pressures and tensions built-in there.

a. School Involvement Affirmative Action Policy

It is proposed that leave policies for school related needs be studied jointly by managers and employees. An explicit statement by employers affirming the value of school involvement (e.g., similar to affirmative action statements) is one way to recognize the social importance of children and their education.

b. Employer Assisted Child Care

One of the main sources of tardiness and unexcused absences among working parents, particularly mothers, is related to problems in arranging alternative care for young children while their mothers are at work. Alternative child care is a need that must be met by any family which does not have a built-in child care system, such as their mothers or other relatives residing in the household.

Some forms of voucher system for child care assistance could be extended to cover school-aged children. It would allow workers to choose arrangements which best suit their preferences and needs. When offered in a "cafeteria" system of employee benefits, it could not only seerve the needs of employees but the concerns of employers as well.

c. Employee Assistance Programs

Three highly related and complementary approaches to deal with stress are suggested. The first consists of a comprehensive examination of the workplace, its job structure and overall functioning as a social organization to minimize or eliminate those conditions which produce stress.

The second involves taking measures to increase the flexibility of parents to attend to unexpected child-related events that often require no more than an hour or two. Frequently penalties are imposed or workers must forego a full day's pay when all they needed was a couple of hours of leave for these kinds of events.

The third major approach to workplace improvement involves expanding the format of Employee Assistance Programs to cover services related to the mental and financial health of workers and their families. These services could include on-site education and training activities focusing on "Stress Management," "Parenting Education," and "Financial Counseling." In addition, "Information and Referral Services" can be offered to cover needs usually met by existing community based agencies and services. These include marital counseling, child abuse, legal assistance, adult education and training, and recreation services.

The types of assistance proposed here are most critical for single parents, given their relatively limited time and financial resources. They also can be of great importance to dual-earner families and parents and, in many cases, to single and/or childless workers.

2. General Recommendations for Schools

There are many ways in which parents can become involved in the education of their children. We found that most parents expressed a desire to be more involved in their children's school activities.

They were particularly interested in attending activities in which their children are taking active part. These included plays, band concerts, and field trips. Unfortunately, many of these activities are scheduled during the mothers' work hours.

Teachers also tend to equate the presence of parents at these types of events with interest and support for their classroom and the school. Unconsciously, the absence can be taken as a sign of apathy or non-interest, often reinforcing already existing misconceptions about divorced mothers and children of "broken homes."

Several suggestions can be derived from the experiences related by parents in these studies. Because of the diversity among schools and grade levels represented in our sample, these suggestions are couched in general terms, and they do not ignore the fact that some or even many schools as well as individual teachers are already implementing similar measures.

a. Scheduling of Activities and Special Events

The most obvious suggestion is that schools should schedule more activities during parents' "after-work" hours. However, as was the case for some of the women in our sample, some people work evenings or irregular shifts. There is a need to find a balance between day, evening and weekend activities scheduled by schools. In any case, teachers should expect that some parents will not participate. A simple reminder to children about the fact that some parents are very busy, or working and unable to attend, would do much to alleviate the guilt many parents feel for not being there, as well as the disappointment or embarrassment often experienced by their children.

b. Publicity for Upcoming School Events

Several parents stated that if they knew about upcoming events well enough in advance, time off could be requested or arrangements made with co-workers and supervisors to be away for short periods.

c. School Involvement of Non-custodial Parents

In single-parent families (and in step-parent families as well), the custodial parent is not always the one who is most involved in children's education. Divorce and loss of custody does not necessarily eliminate non-custodial parents from children's lives. We found several instances of a clear commitment to participate.

At a minimum, schools should inform non-custodial parents about their children's educational progress. Furthermore, these parents should also be advised about school events. Such an expanded communication policy can include mailing school grades and other school information to non-custodial parents who do not reside in the

same city.

d. Homework

Although about 40 percent of the single parent families in our sample reported that sometimes other adults helped their children with homework, it appears that perhaps least 60 percent of these parents do not have any help. Homework can be a constant source of stress and tension in the family. First, it often calls for parents to continously monitor children's homework assignments and keep them away from distractions. Second, in addition to draining energy from exhausted mothers, this monitoring function often turns into an adversarial relationship. It can become a source of strain in relationships that are already restricted to just a few hours a day for working single mothers who must also manage their households. Third, many mothers are not fully prepared (educationally) to help their children with most homework assignments. Half of our sample had only a high school education.

No unequivocal solution to the homework riddle was suggested by our studies of working parents. However, the issue of homework, its nature and its purpose, is something that must be considered seriously by the education community.

3. Specific Recommendations

Active support of schools by private sector businesses and other employers can take many forms. Some forms involve transfer of tangible goods, including not only what a business produces, but also money and certain services. One example of that type of business-school collaboration is being developed at SEDL by its Ways to Improve Schools and Education Project (WISE). It involves setting up business-school teams to help meet schools' staff development needs. Another example of business-school collaboration is the popular Adopt-a-School model, such as those in place between the Dallas and Austin Independent School Districts and their respective business communities. The pairing of schools or programs with specific businesses or organizations provides an excellent avenue for involvement by those workers who are childless or those whose children are no longer in the schools.

The Working Parents Project recommends that another type of business-school collaborative effort be initiated, one that would impact the educational attainment of children by helping working parents and single parents become more involved in education, by participating in activities with their own children at their own schools, and by having schools extend information to working parents at their workplaces. We call this strategy the EMPLOYER-SUPPORTED PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL program or, for short, ESPIS.

The WPP's strategy combines in one multi-part, flexible package several components of various programs. These components are

designed to meet needs of dual-earner and single parents as identified in our research. Some other components proposed were identified with the help of colleagues from the region who participated in our September 1983 conference. Other components were identified through information obtained from local projects within our region in addition to projects in other states and other national-level efforts. The search for these additional sources of information has been an integral part of our 1984 activities.

1. The Role of Employers in ESPIS

WPP proposes that employers adopt, a formal public policy that actively affirms the value for society of a better educated new generation. If employers not only facilitate but actually actively promote the involvement of their employees in the education of their own children, they will accomplish a massive transference of social energy to the educational enterprise. The bulk of that energy is provided by the parents themselves, who have the primary vested interest in the educational success of their own children. The role of the employer is to provide the initial push, to remove some barriers that currently may restrain the universal interest that working parents have in providing their children with maximum educational advantages.

Those children must be perceived by businesses as future workers who will continue to produce goods and services and as future consumers of those same goods and services.

In addition to these long-term considerations, it is important to note that there are benefits in a trend toward an increasing humanization of the workplace, where workers can expect to be treated more as persons than as expendable human resources. The affirmation of the value of children's education in general, and that of the children of employees in particular, would let employees know that the employers care for them and their families. This should have a positive effect on the overall level of satisfaction of workers and on their morale and productivity.

WPP suggests a number of alternative measures that represent various levels of corporate commitment and support, with corresponding costsof corporate time and resources.

The following are some of the recommended program measures that could be implemented, in addition to the adoption of an official "Corporate Statement of Support for Employee/Parental School Involvement." This statement, when issued by the highest corporate authority, makes explicit the rationale for encouraging employees to become more involved in the education of their children.

These additional program measures include:

a) Use of already existing leave mechanisms for parental involvement in the education of children, or

b) Provide a new policy of matching, hour for hour, existing short-term, hourly leave provisions, provided that such leave is requested by employees in advance and for school involvement purposes. This policy could establish a maximum number of hours per calendar (or school) year to be matched for each employee.

c) Another alternative is to establish a special form of short-term leave, to be designated for school involvement purposes, and to be requested and granted following established procedures, not to exceed a set number of hours per calendar year.

d) Distribute the Corporate Statement to employees through regular formal information channels.

e) Issue a press release to announce adoption of the Corporate Statement.

f) Provide space on a bulletin board(s) or regular space in internal newsletters or other information channels to be used to publicize information about educational issues, school activities, or other education-related items of interest to parents. The information may be furnished by employees themselves or it may be received from liaison persons in the schools, school districts, PTAs, etc.

g) Provide access to and suitable space for informational or training activities for employees, using speakers, leaders, or trainers provided by schools, school districts, voluntary organizations, or any other appropriate community agencies.

h) Provide access to corporate facilities and resources, including either a special fund for these activities or use of corporate training mechanisms, to support training and information activities specified under the collaboration program.

i) Provide facilities for the operation, on the work site, of special purpose groups of employees, such as Social Support Groups of Single Parents.

2. The Role of Schools in ESPIS

SEDL's Parent Involvement in Education Project (PIEP) has gathered evidence that school personnel, including teachers, principals, and other administrators, value parental participation. Despite such attitudes, however, specific practices and policies schools actually may discourage participation and support on the

part of parents. Most teachers and school administrators have not received, as part of their formal education, specialized training to prepare them for successful implementation of parental participation policies and practices.

The strategy that WPP recommends requires a true two-way collaborative effort between employers and schools. The strategy requires from the school partners a concerted effort to provide information about regularly scheduled activities, such as holidays, inservice training days, achievement testing periods, and parent-teacher conference periods, to their business-sector partners.

It also requires that school personnel be more aware of the limitations of those parents who work full-time during the day, so that at least some school activities, both at the classroom level and at the school-wide level, are scheduled in a more balanced fashion between day and evening hours. Such rearrangements of schedules would increase the likelihoodthat working parents, with support from their employers, could take part in school events.

Finally, this effort would require schools to provide some limited forms of outreach activities, most of an informational nature, directed to the participating workplaces. The capacity of individual schools' to provide this outreach may be limited, but permanent "public relations" efforts are becoming more common, especially among large, urban school districts that can afford specialized personnel. These efforts target parents, the private sector, and other community organizations.

The initiative for a collaborative arrangement, regardless of where it originates, requires that the appropropriate decision-making bodies within each organization act on it. Depending on the scope of the activities to be carried out, approval of the program may require that it be sanctioned by the school district's board. Although this approval might take some time, such an endorsement would represent a powerful incentive to all the people involved and it would stimulate administrators to expedite the necessary actions that are required to implement the program successfully at the classroom level.

Some school districts might find that their governing boards have already approved policies and/or mechanisms to increase support from the community, including the business community. In that case, implementation of the ESPIS Program may proceed more quickly and may require only a concerted effort to be communicated to the public at large.

Publicity about this particular kind of school-business activity can generate community-wide support for the educational enterprise, increase community cohesiveness, and increase the chances that the general public, as taxpayers, will be willing to bear the cost of

education in general.

In order to carry out its part of the collaborative effort, the school districts may designate a person or office to act as liaison with the participating businesses.

The following are some of the possible program components that would be the responsibility of the liaison person or office:

a) To maintain regular contact with school principals and other school officials to gather necessary information about educational activities.

b) To provide participating businesses information about system-wide activities, such as the official school calendar and announcements of special events, and about special events that will take place in individual schools. The format can be a newsletter suitable for posting in specially designated areas in the workplaces.

c) To identify, within the school district, resource persons and materials that can be used for outreach activities.

d) To identify resources outside the school district, such as local community programs, voluntary organizations, professional organizations, Educational Service Centers, colleges of education, education research and development agencies, etc.

e) To prepare a program of self-contained, short (one hour or less) outreach activities that can be carried out at workplaces (e.g., "brown bag seminars" to be held during the lunch hour or at other suitable times). Topics that have been used in other programs and that are supported by specific comments made by respondents in the WPP research with dual-earner and single-parent families include:

   1) preparation for parent-teacher conferences,

   2) parental involvement options for working parents,

   3) helping with homework,

   4) developing good home study habits,

   5) Relating to children (i.e., discipline with support), and

   6) questions and answers about school policies and issues, such as counseling for career choices, vocational education, determination of attendance zones, parental access to school records, transfer policies, school

safety, school lunch programs, cross-town transportation, provision of in-school after-school care, gifted and talented programs, summer school programs, etc.

The WPP staff is refining these recommendations for implementation in the Central Texas area. On the basis of that experience, detailed and practical guidelines will be prepared for dissemination throughout the SEDL region and the nation.

These and other changes in procedures and policies of employers, schools, and other agencies can be of great importance to working parents, in particular, because they allow them greater flexibility to plan not only for the multiple demands arising from their work careers, but also those arising from child care, their children's education, and other family needs. Changes such as those discussed here should be welcomed by people in other family forms, including those single, childless, or with older children, since these measures could also accommodate their own needs for a satisfying personal life apart from their jobs and careers.

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APPENDIX B

INVOLVING DUAL-EARNER AND SINGLE WORKING PARENT FAMILIES IN THE EDUCATION OF THEIR CHILDREN: SOME RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

Testimony presented at the hearing of the Prevention Strategies Task Force of the Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families on "Improving American Education: Roles for Parents," held in Washington, D.C. on June 7, 1984

WORKING PARENTS PROJECT

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A. Introduction

The Working Parents Project (WPP), funded by the National Institute of Education, has as its current goal to develop a program and supporting materials designed to promote collaboration, throughout the SEDL region, between employers and schools to facilitate and increase single and working parents' involvement in the schools. The WPP is developing forms of employer-schools collaboration that are suggested by research as being potentially useful and those that have been found to serve the special needs of working parents and single parents in other communities.

B. Research Background

Research at SEDL, as well as research elsewhere, has identified several needs and concerns that are especially important to dual-earner and single-parent families. Some of those needs are beyond WPP's sphere of influence (e.g., inadequate income, housing, transportation, child support payments, etc.). Other needs, however, can be addressed through changes in policies and practices of two institutions that influence the lives of families and their members on a daily basis: schools and workplaces.

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During three cycles of data collection from 1981 through 1983, 30 dual-earner and 30 single-parent families were interviewed in-depth by WPP staff to determine how work and family life were interrelated in a sample of Anglo, Black, and Mexican American families. Half of the women in the sample worked in clerical jobs for the local telephone company and half worked in clerical jobs in local banks. All the families interviewed had at least one child in elementary school. The research identified some workplace policies and practices that had an effect on the availability of working parents to become involved in the education of their elementary school age children. Other aspects of family life were also explored, including alternative child care arrangements for the 119 dependent children, allocation of household responsibilities, the nature of the relationships of families with their own relatives and friends, and parenting styles.

While conducting this research, the WPP was also seeking out individuals, programs, and agencies within SEDL's region that were actively working to meet the needs of working parents and their children. A regional mini-conference sponsored by the WPP during the fall of 1983 brought together a cross-section of family researchers, service providers, and advocates (see Proceedings from Invited Conference, December 1983). Conference participants were selected on the basis of their expertise in programs designed to meet the most important needs and concerns identified during the interviews with WPP's sample of dual-earner and single-parent families.

Information from the dual- and single-earner family interviews, from the conference of workers in the field, and from other agencies and programs, all pointed clearly to one need that held promise of being approached through local collaborations: expansion of opportunities for working parents' involvement in the schools. In addition, few efforts have been directed toward changing workplace policies that affect parental involvement in children's schooling.

C. Employment Related Barriers to Parental Involvement in School

The research conducted by the Working Parents Project with the sample of dual-earner and single-parent families, provided some indications about

some effects of rigidity in short-term leave policies on the involvement of working parents in the schooling of their children. The leave policies in effect for the women in the sample varied in some significant ways. The women were all employees of the phone company or one of five different large banks. The men who were included in the sample as spouses of the selected sample of women, represented almost as many different employers as there were men.

The phone company can be characterized as having a rigid short-term leave policy. In effect, there was no short-term leave. Tardiness of more than a few minutes was not allowed, so in those cases workers simply missed a whole day, which was then counted as an unexcused absence. The smallest length of time that a worker could take off was a whole day. Workers could have up to three "unexcused, unpaid leave days" in a calendar year. Days of absence exceeding that maximum number were recorded in the workers' files and could constitute a cause for dismissal. There was no accrued sick leave. Rather, a sick worker is defined as being "disabled" and was required to submit a doctor's certificate in order not to be penalized.

Paid vacations were generous, especially for those with many years of seniority. However, such leave had to be taken in blocks of a week or more. The choice of dates for accrued vacation was determined by order of seniority in a given job classification for a particular unit or department.

In addition to scheduled vacation times, seasonal cycles often resulted in a low volume of work. During those periods, supervisors could offer days off without pay (and also without penalty) to one or more employees. Again, seniority was used to determine priority for the option to take those days off. Several married women in the sample, having relatively high total family income, often took advantage of those extra unpaid leave days. Although not scheduled in advance, these days could be used to run errands, rest, and (in some cases) visit their children's schools.

An additional special feature of phone company policies was the irregular weekly schedule for telephone operators. Their days off were determined a week in advance in a seemingly random pattern and on a variable schedule. Women in the sample who were operators reported

difficulties in planning for family festivities and other special occasions, since they did not know in advance when they would be off. In some cases, they could get another worker to trade days off in order to accommodate family needs. Finally, some of the operators worked evening and split shifts. The choice of shifts was also determined by seniority, and most operators in the sample were in positions to choose the shifts that they wanted to work.

Banks, although they varied somewhat, could be characterized as having flexible leave policies for most jobs held by the women in the sample. Only four of the dual-earner bank mothers and one of the single (divorced) bank mothers reported rigid leave policies. In the banks, short-term leave was largely at the discretion of the employee's supervisor. Most of the women reported having good relations with their supervisors; therefore, access to this type of leave did not seem to be a problem. The leave policies for men in the dual-earner sample varied somewhat, but a majority (19 out of 30) reported being able to take short leaves that had not been scheduled in advance.

An attempt was made to determine if there were any relationships between flexibility/rigidity of short-term leave policies, the allocation of responsibility for school involvement, and the relative level of that involvement. Based on reports by respondents, it was possible (1) to classify each family in terms of which parent was responsible for monitoring the children's schooling and (2) to judge the relative intensity of that involvement.

Among dual-earner families, couples in which both parents had jobs with flexible leave policies tended to be more involved in the schooling of their children. This involvement generally took the form of more visits to the schools, frequent attendance by both parents of regularly scheduled parent-teacher conferences, going along on field trips, helping out in special projects, more frequent attendance of school events in which their children were involved, more frequent attendance of whole-school functions such as PTA meetings, and more frequent personal and telephone non-crisis contacts with teachers.

Dual-earner families in which fathers had undertaken the responsibility for maintaining contact with the schools were characterized by the fact fathers were those who had jobs with flexible leave policies while the mothers had jobs with rigid leave policies. Among those couples in which both parents had jobs with rigid leave policies, it was the mothers who assumed the responsibility for involvement in the education of their children.

Among the mothers in single-parent families, who did not have husbands to supplement or complement the tasks involved in keeping up with children's education, many had to make great sacrifices to be able to do it. Those working in jobs characterized by rigid leave policies had to take time away from other family needs in order to be involved in their children's education.

Unexpectedly, the research data showed that many mothers who had flexible leave policies reported that they seldom took advantage of such flexibility for school involvement purposes. These types of leave were characterized as informal arrangements in which employee and supervisor agreed on a method for repayment of the work time missed. This usually involved either working longer hours within the week with no overtime pay, or taking other forms of leave that were accrued in hour units and could be used in hour units.

For the bank employees, WPP interviews indicated that there appeared to be a hierarchy of acceptable reasons/excuses for them to use unscheduled short-term absences. Included among such absences were coming in late, leaving earlier, or taking two or three hours in the middle of the day. These types of short-term absences, unlike vacation leave, were not normally scheduled well in advance. They are also treated as different from sick or disability leave, which is unscheduled but of undetermined duration.

Although no respondents reported that supervisors kept special accountings of child or family related leave requests, several indicated that only true "minor emergencies" regarding their children were ever used to justify short-term leaves. Problems with babysitters, minor school or day care accidents, and sudden minor child illnesses all qualified for

these types of short-term leave. Some respondents indicated that taking time to attend a school function would not be considered by co-workers to be legitimate reason. The importance of the groups' judgment of reasons for leaves may have been related to the importance of certain time deadlines and cycles of banking operations, in which the absence of a worker had to be absorbed by the rest, resulting in additional work for the group. An unwritten rule of equity seemed to be operating at the banks that dictated that school involvement during regular working hours would be frowned upon by co-workers and may be deemed unacceptable by supervisors.

It is this "workplace culture," regulated by both formal and informal norms and rules, where the WPP staff believes change can take place that could result in greater participation in schools on the part of working parents, both fathers and mothers, and for employees at all levels of the corporate ladder.

D. WPP Strategies for Increasing Parental Involvement in Schools

The public affirmation of the social value of parents becoming more closely involved in the education of their children is the cornerstone of the WPP's strategy for implementation of changes suggested by these research findings. There is sufficient empirical evidence supporting the critical role that involved parents can have in the overall achievement of children. Research on effective schools has documented the importance of strong parental and community involvement as key elements that can make schools more effective.

Active support of schools by the private sector, business, and employers can take many forms. Some are based on the transference of tangible goods, including not only what a business produces, but also money and certain services. A good example of one type of business/school collaboration is being developed at SEDL by its Ways to Improve Schools and Education (WISE) Project (Executive Summary of Annual Report, December 1983). It involves setting up business-school collaboration to help meet school staff development needs. Project WPP recommends that another type of business-school collaborative effort be initiated which would impact the educational attainment of children by helping working parents become more involved in the education of their children.

1. The Role of Employers

The role that is envisioned for employers by WPP staff is the adoption, as part of the formal, public corporate policy and image, of an active affirmation of the value for society of a better educated new generation. If employers not only facilitate, but actually actively promote the involvement of their employees in the education of their children, they would be accomplishing a massive transference of social energy to the educational enterprise. The bulk of that energy is provided by the parents themselves, who have the primary vested interest in the educational success of their children. The role of the employer is to provide the initial push, to remove some barriers that currently may restrain the universal interest that working parents have in providing their children with maximum educational advantages.

For businesses, those children must be perceived as future workers who will continue to produce goods and services and as future consumers of those same goods and services.

In addition to these long-term considerations, it is important to note that there are benefits in a trend toward an increasing humanization of the workplace, where workers can expect to be treated more as persons than as expendable human resources. The affirmation of the value of children's education in general, and of the children of employees in particular, would let employees know that the employers care for them and their families and should have a positive effect on the overall level of satisfaction of workers and on their morale and productivity.

2. The Role of Schools

SEDL's Parent Involvement in Education Project (PIEP) has gathered evidence (Executive Summary of Annual Report, December 1983) that school personnel, including teachers, principals and other administrators, value parental participation. It is not always clear, however, that specific practices and policies of the schools actually encourage participation and support on the part of parents. Most teachers and school administrators have not received, as part of their formal education, specialized training to prepare them for successful implementation of parental participation policies and practices.

The strategy that WPP is recommending requires a true two-way collaborative effort between employers and schools. The strategy would require from the school partners a concerted effort to provide information about regularly scheduled activities, such as holidays, inservice training days, achievement testing periods, and parent-teacher conference periods, to their business-sector partners.

It would also require a greater awareness by school personnel of the limitations of those parents who work full-time during the day, so that at least some school activities, both at the classroom level and at the school-wide level, are scheduled in a more balanced fashion between day and evening hours. Such rearrangements of schedules would increase the likelihood that working parents, with assistance from their employers, could take part in school events.

Finally, this effort would require schools to provide some limited forms of outreach activities, most of an informational nature, directed to the participating workplaces. It is likely that there would be some practical limitations in the capacity of individual schools' personnel to provide this outreach. Form many school districts, however, it is becoming more and more common, as a permanent "public relations" effort, to undertake public information activities directed not only at the parents, but also at the private sector and other community organizations. This is especially the case of large, urban school districts that can afford specialized personnel to carry out these functions. WPP refers to this recommended collaborative effort as the Employer-Supported Parental Involvement in School Program (ESPIS).

E. Employer-Supported Parental Involvement in School Program (ESPIS)

The initiative to implement this collaborative effort within a given corporation or business may come from within the corporation, either from management units, such as personnel or public relations departments, or from employee organizations, such as labor unions, human relations committees, or other employee groups. The initiative could also originate from a specific school or a school district and be presented to a corporation either through management or through employee organizations. Finally, the ESPIS program could be initiated by an independent third

party, such as chambers of commerce, civic organizations, Parent Teacher Associations or Parent Teacher Student Associations, city-wide council of PTAs, or an educational agency, such as SEDL's Working Parents Project. Regardless of where the initiative comes from, or how it is transmitted, successful adoption and implementation will require the concurrence and active support from individuals within all the organizations.

1. Business/Corporate Program Component

WPP suggests a number of alternative measures that represent various levels of corporate commitment and support, with corresponding levels of expenditure of corporate time and resources.

The following are some of the recommended program measures that could be implemented, in addition to the adoption of an official "Corporate Statement of Support for Employee/Parental School Involvement." This statement should be issued by the highest authority, making explicit the rationale for encouraging employees to become more involved in the education of their children.

The alternative measures include:

a) Encouraging the use of already existing leave mechanisms for parental involvement in the education of children.

b) An alternative strategy is the provision of a new policy of matching, hour for hour, existing short-term, hourly leave provisions, provided that such leave is requested by employees in advance and for school involvement purposes. This policy could establish a maximum number of hours per calendar (or school) year to be matched for each employee.

c) Another alternative is establishment of a special form of short-term leave, to be designated for school involvement purposes, and to be requested and granted following established procedures, not to exceed a set number of hours per calendar year.

d) Distribution of the Corporate Statement to employees through regular formal information channels.

e) Issuance of a press release to announce adoption of the Corporate Statement.

f) Provision of space on a bulletin board(s) or regular space in internal newsletters or other information channels to be used to publicize

information about educational issues, school activities, or other education-related items of interest to parents. The information may be furnished by employees themselves, or it may be received from liaison persons in the schools, school districts, PTAs, etc.

g) Provision of access to and suitable space to conduct informational or training activities for employees, using speakers, leaders, or trainers who are provided to the corporation by schools, school districts, voluntary organizations, or any other appropriate community agency.

h) Provision of access to corporate facilities and resources, including either a special fund for these activities or use of corporate training mechanisms, to support training and information activities specified under the collaboration program.

i) Provision of facilities for the operation, on the work site, of special purpose groups of employees, such as Social Support Groups of Single Parents.

2. School Program Component

As described for the case of the business component, the initiative for a collaborative arrangement, irrespective of where it originates, would require that the appropropriate decision-making bodies within each organization act on it. Depending on the scope of the activities to be carried out, approval of the program may require that it be sanctioned by the school district's board. Although this approval might take some time, it would represent a more powerful incentive to all the people involved and it would stimulate administrators to expedite the necessary actions that are required to successfully implement the program at the classroom level.

Some school districts might find that their governing boards have already approved policies and/or mechanisms to increase support from the community, including the business community. In that case, implementation of the ESPIS Program may proceed more quickly and may require only a concerted effort to be communicated to the public at large.

Publicity about this particular kind of school-business activity can generate community-wide support for the educational enterprise, increase community cohesiveness, and increase the chances that the general public, as taxpayers, will be willing to bear the cost of education in general.

In order to carry out its part of the collaborative effort, the school districts may designate a person or office to act as liaison with the participating businesses.

The following are some of the possible program components that would be the responsibility of the liaison person or office:

a) To maintain regular contact with school principals and other school officials to gather necessary information about educational activities.

b) To provide participating businesses information about system-wide activities, such as the official school calendar, announcements of special events, and about special events that will take place in individual schools. The format can be a newsletter suitable for posting in specially designated areas in the workplaces.

c) To identify within the school district resource persons and materials that can be used for outreach activities.

d) To identify resources outside the school district, such as local community programs, voluntary organizations, professional organizations, Educational Service Centers, colleges of education, education research and development agencies, etc.

e) To prepare a program of self-contained, short (one hour or less) outreach activities that can be carried out at workplaces (e.g., "brown bag seminars" to be held during the lunch hour or at other suitable times). Topics that have been used in other programs and that are supported by specific comments made by respondents in the WPP research with dual-earner and single-parent families include:

1) preparation for parent-teacher conferences,
2) parental involvement options for working parents,
3) helping with homework,
4) developing good home study habits,
5) Relating to children (i.e., discipline with support), and
6) questions and answers about school policies and issues, such as counseling for career choices, vocational education, determination of attendance zones, parental access to school records, transfer policies, school safety, school lunch programs, cross-town transportation, provision of in-school after-school care, gifted and talented programs, summer school programs, etc.

At the present time the WPP staff is refining these recommendations for implementation in the Central Texas area. On the basis of that experience, detailed and practical guidelines will be prepared for dissemination throughout the SEDL region and the nation.

Additional recommendations to school personnel related to parental involvement include:

1) A well-publicized schedule of events would enable more parents to anticipate as well as participate in school activities. In addition to direct mailings or phone calls, schools can promote periodical listings of activities in local newspapers or neighborhood publications. Some schools publish regular newsletters mailed to all residents of their attendance zone.

Many parents stated that if they knew well in advance, time off could be requested or arrangements made with co-workers and supervisors to be away for a short period. Children often can be somewhat unreliable messengers to the home for school news.

2) Schools should inform non-custodial parents about their children's educational progress. Furthermore, these parents should be advised about school events. It should be left up to parents and children to decide who can or should attend school functions. Only in extreme cases, such as when a court order applies, should schools prohibit non-custodial parents' access to information held by schools and to contacts with school officials regarding the educational progress of their children. Such an expanded communication policy also can include mailing school grades and other school information to non-custodial parents who do not reside in the same city.

3) The nature and purpose of homework is something that must be considered seriously by the education community. To the extent that it builds up and reinforces skills acquired during the school day, it may be a necessary part of education. However, educators also must recognize its potential for frustrating parents, who cannot help, and children, who cannot complete assignments.

Although about 40 percent of the single parent families in our sample reported that sometimes other adults helped their children with homework, this also implies that at least 60 percent do not have any help.

Homework can be a constant source of stress and tension in the family. First, it often calls for parents to constantly monitor children's work on assignments and keep them away from distractions. Second, in addition to being a drain of energy from exhausted mothers, this monitoring function often turns into an adversarial relationship. It can become a source of strain in relationships that are already restricted to just a few hours a day for working single mothers who must also manage their households. Third, many mothers are ill-equipped to help their children with many homework assignments. Half of our sample had no more than a high school education.

One solution that has been implemented by some after-school care programs is the allocation of space, time, and tutors to supervise children who wish to complete their assignments during that period. This frees both parents and children's time at home for recreation, relaxation, or household work.

An alternative solution, implemented by some teachers and schools as an informal policy, is simply not to assign homework to be done over the weekend. With their time already limited, parents and children in dual-earner and single-parent families can allocate weekends for family pursuits of a relaxing nature.

The elimination of homework as a source of family conflict and stress could have a significant impact on the quality of life in single-parent households, and on other family forms as well.

These and other changes in procedures and policies of employers, schools, and other agencies can be of great importance to working parents, in particular, because they allow them greater flexibility to plan not only for the multiple demands arising from their work careers, but also those arising from child care, their children's education, and other family needs. Changes such as those discussed here should be welcomed by other family forms, including those single, childless, or with older children, since these measures could also accommodate their own needs for a satisfying personal life apart from their jobs and careers.

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Biographical Notes

Dr. Renato Espinoza, Senior Researcher of the Working Parents Project, graduated from The University of Chile in Santiago, Chile, with a degree in Psychology in 1964. He did his graduate work at The University of Texas at Austin, where he earned his Ph.D. in Social Psychology in 1971. He has been involved in development of materials and research on parent education and families since 1974. His wife also works full-time while they raise two school-age daughters.

Nancy Naron, Research Specialist, graduated from Louisiana State University at Shreveport in 1976. She earned her Master of Arts in Clinical Psychology from Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas in 1980. She has been with the Working Parents Project since January of 1983.

APPENDIX C

DUAL-EARNER, SINGLE WORKING PARENT FAMILIES AND EDUCATION: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOL-BUSINESS COLLABORATION

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A. INTRODUCTION

Parents are essential actors in the formal education of their children. For many dual-earner and single-parent families, the uncoordinated, often-conflicting demands of school and workplace pose dilemmas and parental responsibility--unreasonable choices among demands for time and attention.

The Working Parents Project (WPP) of the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL) in Austin, Texas, offers some research-based suggestions. With funding from the National Institute of Education, WPP has developed and is sharing a set of guidelines under which schools and employers can work together to relieve the dilemmas to the benefit of all concerned: employers, school personnel, parents, and (most especially) the students.

B. RESEARCH BACKGROUND

During three cycles of data collection from 1981 through 1983, 30 dual-earner and 30 single-parent families were interviewed in-depth by WPP staff to determine how work and family life were interrelated in that sample of Anglo, Black, and Mexican American families. Half of the women in the sample worked in clerical jobs for a telephone company and half worked in clerical jobs in banks. There were 119 dependent children in the sample, at least one of whom in each family was enrolled in elementary school. The research identified workplace policies and practices that affected working parents' involvement in the education of

their children. Other aspects of family life were also explored, including alternative child care arrangements for the dependent children, allocation of household responsibilities, the nature of the relationships of families with their own relatives and friends, and parenting styles.

While conducting this research, the WPP was also seeking out individuals, programs, and agencies within SEDL's region that were actively working to meet the needs of working parents and their children. A regional mini-conference sponsored by the WPP during the fall of 1983 brought together a cross-section of family researchers, service providers, and advocates. Conference participants were selected on the basis of their expertise in programs designed to meet the most important needs and concerns identified during the interviews with WPP's sample of dual-earner and single-parent families.

Information from the dual-earner and single-parent family interviews, from the conference of workers in the field, and from other agencies and programs, all pointed clearly to one need that held promise of being approached through local collaborations: expansion of opportunities for working parents' involvement in the schools. In addition, the resource-identification aspect of the project found few efforts directed toward changing workplace policies that affect parental involvement in children's schooling.

1. **Short-term Leave Policies as Employment-Related Barriers to Parental Involvement in School**

The research conducted by the Working Parents Project provided indications about effects of rigidity in short-term leave policies, that is, taking less than a day off, usually just a few hours, has on the involvement of working parents in the schooling of their children. The leave policies in effect for the women in the sample varied in significant ways. The women were all employees of the phone company or one of five different large banks. The men were included in the sample as spouses of the selected sample of women, and thus represented almost as many different employers as there were men.

The phone company jobs held by women in the sample can be characterized

as having a rigid short-term leave policy. In effect, there was no short-term leave. Tardiness of more than a few minutes was not allowed, so in those cases workers simply missed a whole day, which was then counted as an unexcused absence. The briefest time a worker could take off was a whole day. Workers could have up to three "unexcused, unpaid leave days" in a calendar year. Days of absence exceeding that maximum number were recorded in the workers' files and could constitute a cause for dismissal.

There was no accrued sick leave. Rather, a sick worker was defined as being "disabled" and was required to submit a doctor's certificate in order not to be penalized. Seasonal cycles often resulted in low volumes of work, and during those periods supervisors at the phone company could offer days off without pay (and also without penalty) to one or more employees. Although not scheduled in advance, these days were used by the women to run errands, rest, and (in some cases) visit their children's schools.

An additional special feature of phone company policies was the irregular weekly schedule for telephone operators. Their days off were determined two weeks in advance in a seemingly random pattern and on a variable schedule. Finally, some of the telephone operators worked evening and split shifts. The choice of shifts was determined by seniority, and most operators in the sample could choose the shifts that they wanted to work.

Banks could be characterized overall as having flexible leave policies for most jobs held by the women in the sample. Among the bank employees, only four of the dual-earner mothers and one of the single (divorced) mothers reported rigid leave policies. In the banks, short-term leave was largely at the discretion of the employee's supervisor. Most of the women reported having good relations with their supervisors; therefore, access to this type of leave did not seem to be a problem.

Finally, the leave policies for men in the dual-earner sample varied somewhat, but a majority (19 out of 30) reported being able to take short leaves that had not been scheduled in advance.

Among dual-earner families, couples in which both parents had jobs with flexible leave policies tended to be more involved in the schooling of

their children. This involvement generally took the form of more visits to the schools, frequent attendance by both parents of regularly scheduled parent-teacher conferences, going along on field trips, helping out in special projects, more frequent attendance of school events in which their children were involved, more frequent attendance of whole-school functions such as PTA meetings, and more frequent personal and telephone non-crisis contacts with teachers.

Dual-earner families in which fathers had undertaken the responsibility for maintaining contact with the schools were characterized by the fact that those fathers had jobs with flexible leave policies while the mothers had jobs with rigid leave policies. Among those couples in which both parents had jobs with rigid leave policies, it was the mothers who assumed the responsibility for involvement in the education of their children.

Among the mothers heading single-parent families, many had to make great sacrifices to be able to keep up with their children's educations without assistance from husbands. Those working in jobs characterized by rigid leave policies had to take time away from other family needs in order to be involved in their children's education.

2. **Workplace Culture as an Employer-Related Barrier to Parental Involvement in Schools**

Unexpectedly, the research data showed that many mothers who had flexible leave policies reported that they seldom took advantage of such flexibility for school involvement purposes. These types of leave were characterized as informal arrangements in which employee and supervisor agreed on a method for repayment of the work time missed. This usually involved either working longer hours within the week with no overtime pay, or taking other forms of leave that were accrued in hour units and could be used in hour units.

For the bank employees, WPP interviews indicated that there appeared to be a hierarchy of acceptable reasons/excuses for them to use unscheduled short-term absences. Included among such absences were coming in late, leaving earlier, or taking two or three hours in the middle of the day. These types of short-term absences, unlike vacation leave, were not normally scheduled well in advance. They are also treated as different

from sick or disability leave, which is unscheduled but of undetermined duration.

Although no respondents reported that supervisors kept special accountings of child or family-related leave requests, several indicated that only true "minor emergencies" regarding their children were ever used to justify short-term leaves. Problems with babysitters, minor school or day care accidents, and sudden minor child illnesses all qualified for these types of short-term leave. Some respondents indicated that taking time to attend a school function would not be considered by co-workers to be a legitimate reason. The importance of the groups' judgment of reasons for leaves may have been related to the importance of certain time deadlines and cycles of banking operations, in which the absence of a worker had to be absorbed by the rest, resulting in additional work for the group. An unwritten rule of equity, part of the "workplace culture" seemed to be operating at the banks, dictating that school involvement during regular working hours would be frowned upon by co-workers and may be deemed unacceptable by supervisors.

It is this "workplace culture," regulated by both formal and informal norms and rules, where the WPP staff believes change can take place that could result in greater participation in schools on the part of working parents, both fathers and mothers, and for employees at all levels of the corporate ladder.

C. WPP STRATEGIES FOR INCREASING PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLS

Active support of schools by private sector businesses and other employers can take many forms. Some forms involve transfer of tangible goods, including not only what a business produces, but also money and certain services. One example of that type of business-school collaboration is being developed at SEDL by its Ways to Improve Schools and Education Project (WISE). It involves setting up business-school teams to help meet schools' staff development needs. Another example of business-school collaboration is the popular Adopt-a-School model, such as those in place between the Dallas and Austin

Independent School Districts and their respective business communities. The pairing of schools or programs with specific businesses or organizations provides an excellent avenue for involvement by those workers who are childless or those whose children are no longer in the schools.

The Working Parents Project recommends that another type of business-school collaborative effort be initiated, one that would impact the educational attainment of children by helping working parents and single parents become more involved in education, by participating in activities with their own children at their own schools, and by having schools extend information to working parents at their workplaces. We call this strategy the EMPLOYER-SUPPORTED PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL program or, for short, ESPIS.

1. **The Role of Employers in ESPIS**

WPP proposes that employers adopt, a formal public policy that actively affirms the value for society of a better educated new generation. If employers not only facilitate but actually actively promote the involvement of their employees in the education of their own children, they will accomplish a massive transference of social energy to the educational enterprise. The bulk of that energy is provided by the parents themselves, who have the primary vested interest in the educational success of their own children. The role of the employer is to provide the initial push, to remove some barriers that currently may restrain the universal interest that working parents have in providing their children with maximum educational advantages.

Those children must be perceived by businesses as future workers who will continue to produce goods and services and as future consumers of those same goods and services.

In addition to these long-term considerations, it is important to note that there are benefits in a trend toward an increasing humanization of the workplace, where workers can expect to be treated more as persons than as expendable human resources. The affirmation of the value of children's education in general, and that of the children of employees in particular, would let employees know that the employers care for them and their

families. This should have a positive effect on the overall level of satisfaction of workers and on their morale and productivity.

WPP suggests a number of alternative measures that represent various levels of corporate commitment and support, with corresponding costs of corporate time and resources.

The following are some of the recommended program measures that could be implemented, in addition to the adoption of an official "Corporate Statement of Support for Employee/Parental School Involvement." This statement, when issued by the highest corporate authority, makes explicit the rationale for encouraging employees to become more involved in the education of their children.

These additional program measures include:

a) Use of already existing leave mechanisms for parental involvement in the education of children, or

b) Provide a new policy of matching, hour for hour, existing short-term, hourly leave provisions, provided that such leave is requested by employees in advance and for school involvement purposes. This policy could establish a maximum number of hours per calendar (or school) year to be matched for each employee.

c) Another alternative is to establish a special form of short-term leave, to be designated for school involvement purposes, and to be requested and granted following established procedures, not to exceed a set number of hours per calendar year.

d) Distribute the Corporate Statement to employees through regular formal information channels.

e) Issue a press release to announce adoption of the Corporate Statement.

f) Provide space on a bulletin board(s) or regular space in internal newsletters or other information channels to be used to publicize information about educational issues, school activities, or other education-related items of interest to parents. The information may be furnished by employees themselves or it may be received from liaison persons in the schools, school districts, PTAs, etc.

g) Provide access to and suitable space for informational or training

activities for employees, using speakers, leaders, or trainers provided by schools, school districts, voluntary organizations, or any other appropriate community agencies.

h) Provide access to corporate facilities and resources, including either a special fund for these activities or use of corporate training mechanisms, to support training and information activities specified under the collaboration program.

i) Provide facilities for the operation, on the work site, of special purpose groups of employees, such as Social Support Groups of Single Parents.

2. The Role of Schools in ESPIS

SEDL's Parent Involvement in Education Project (PIEP) has gathered evidence that school personnel, including teachers, principals, and other administrators, value parental participation. Despite such attitudes, however, specific practices and policies schools actually may discourage participation and support on the part of parents. Most teachers and school administrators have not received, as part of their formal education, specialized training to prepare them for successful implementation of parental participation policies and practices.

The strategy that WPP recommends requires a true two-way collaborative effort between employers and schools. The strategy requires from the school partners a concerted effort to provide information about regularly scheduled activities, such as holidays, inservice training days, achievement testing periods, and parent-teacher conference periods, to their business-sector partners.

It also requires that school personnel be more aware of the limitations of those parents who work full-time during the day, so that at least some school activities, both at the classroom level and at the school-wide level, are scheduled in a more balanced fashion between day and evening hours. Such rearrangements of schedules would increase the likelihood that working parents, with support from their employers, could take part in school events.

Finally, this effort would require schools to provide some limited forms of outreach activities, most of an informational nature, directed to

the participating workplaces. The capacity of individual schools' to provide this outreach may be limited, but permanent "public relations" efforts are becoming more common, especially among large, urban school districts that can afford specialized personnel. These efforts target parents, the private sector, and other community organizations.

The initiative for a collaborative arrangement, regardless of where it originates, requires that the appropropriate decision-making bodies within each organization act on it. Depending on the scope of the activities to be carried out, approval of the program may require that it be sanctioned by the school district's board. Although this approval might take some time, such an endorsement would represent a powerful incentive to all the people involved and it would stimulate administrators to expedite the necessary actions that are required to implement the program successfully at the classroom level.

Some school districts might find that their governing boards have already approved policies and/or mechanisms to increase support from the community, including the business community. In that case, implementation of the ESPIS Program may proceed more quickly and may require only a concerted effort to be communicated to the public at large.

Publicity about this particular kind of school-business activity can generate community-wide support for the educational enterprise, increase community cohesiveness, and increase the chances that the general public, as taxpayers, will be willing to bear the cost of education in general.

In order to carry out its part of the collaborative effort, the school districts may designate a person or office to act as liaison with the participating businesses.

The following are some of the possible program components that would be the responsibility of the liaison person or office:

a) To maintain regular contact with school principals and other school officials to gather necessary information about educational activities.

b) To provide participating businesses information about system-wide activities, such as the official school calendar and announcements of

special events, and about special events that will take place in individual schools. The format can be a newsletter suitable for posting in specially designated areas in the workplaces.

c) To identify, within the school district, resource persons and materials that can be used for outreach activities.

d) To identify resources outside the school district, such as local community programs, voluntary organizations, professional organizations, Educational Service Centers, colleges of education, education research and development agencies, etc.

e) To prepare a program of self-contained, short (one hour or less) outreach activities that can be carried out at workplaces (e.g., "brown bag seminars" to be held during the lunch hour or at other suitable times). Topics that have been used in other programs and that are supported by specific comments made by respondents in the WPP research with dual-earner and single-parent families include:

1) preparation for parent-teacher conferences,
2) parental involvement options for working parents,
3) helping with homework,
4) developing good home study habits,
5) Relating to children (i.e., discipline with support), and
6) questions and answers about school policies and issues, such as counseling for career choices, vocational education, determination of attendance zones, parental access to school records, transfer policies, school safety, school lunch programs, cross-town transportation, provision of in-school after-school care, gifted and talented programs, summer school programs, etc.

The WPP staff is refining these recommendations for implementation in the Central Texas area. On the basis of that experience, detailed and practical guidelines will be prepared for dissemination throughout the SEDL region and the nation.

These and other changes in procedures and policies of employers, schools, and other agencies can be of great importance to working parents, in particular, because they allow them greater flexibility to plan not only for the multiple demands arising from their work careers, but also those

arising from child care, their children's education, and other family needs. Changes such as those discussed here should be welcomed by people in other family forms, including those single, childless, or with older children, since these measures could also accommodate their own needs for a satisfying personal life apart from their jobs and careers.

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APPENDIX D

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November 1984

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A. INTRODUCTION

The basic focus of the Working Parents Project has been to contribute to the understanding of the issues and problems which are associated with the interrelationships between work, defined as paid employment outside the home, and family life, defined as the other activities that various family members engage in at home and in their communities during the course of their everyday life. Our educational perspective has resulted in paying particular attention to the ways in which the workplace culture, that is its people, policies, and practices, affect the ability and availability of family members to become involved and participate in the education of their children, both at school and at home.

In carrying out activities related to this focus, the project has (1) conducted research with a tri-ethnic sample of dual-earner and single-parent families of elementary-age school children, (2) disseminated findings and developed some specific recommendations derived from the research which are designed to increase the chances for academic as well as social success of the children of working parents, and (3) developed a network of contacts with agencies, organizations, programs, and individuals in the SEDL region who have a stake in the success of working parent and single parent families and their children.

B. BACKGROUND

1. Previous Work

The research phases of the Working Parents Project involved designing and executing an in-depth, mostly qualitative study of the interrelationships between work and family life among a sample of Anglo, Black, and Mexican American dual-earner and single-parent families with school-age children.

In order to explore the impact on family life of maternal full-time employment, half of the sample was composed of dual-earner families, and the other half was composed of single (divorced) working-parent families. The influence of workplace policies and practices on family life were examined by drawing half the sample from families with mothers employed by the telephone company, and the other half from families with mothers who worked for one of five large financial institutions. All families had at least one elementary school-aged child, and all the families lived and worked in Austin area businesses and their children attended Austin area schools.

The parents in each family were interviewed using both a questionnaire and an in-depth, open-ended, semi-structured interview. Data were collected on various aspects of each family's history and development, including parent work histories. Current jobs and workplaces were described by respondents mainly in the

questionnaire, while the open-ended interview explored their perceptions and experiences in combining full-time employment with their family responsibilities as well as other aspects of family life.

Data from the questionnaire were coded for quantitative analyses. Data from the open-ended interviews were transcribed for qualitative analyses. Coding categories were developed and applied to the transcripts, and various categories and typologies were derived to aid in the various analyses.

In WPP's qualitative research studies, which used a small purposive sample, data collection and analysis followed each other very closely. At the end of each cycle of data collection and analysis, some general recommendations were offered. They addressed some of the needs of these families which held some promise of being addressed by either employers, schools, or other community organizations.

a. Recommendations for Employers and Unions

Initially, it was stated that the power of employers is limited since employers cannot force employees to do something they prefer not to do. However, by instituting certain policies and practices an employer can facilitate or encourage parental participation in schools. They also can improve the overall atmosphere at the workplace which could help relieve some of the pressures and tensions built-in there.

(1) School Involvement Affirmative Action Policy

It was proposed that leave policies for school related needs should be studied jointly by managers and employees. An explicit statement by employers affirming the value of school involvement (e.g., similar to affirmative action statements) is one way to recognize the social importance of children and their education.

(2) Employer Assisted Child Care

Some forms of voucher system for child care assistance could be extended to cover school-aged children. It would allow workers to choose arrangements which best suit their preferences and needs. When offered in a "cafeteria" system of employee benefits, it could not only seerve the needs of employees but the concerns of employers as well.

(3) Employee Assistance Programs

Findings from these studies support the premise that workers cannot be perceived and treated as just one more resource (i.e., one which can be used, developed, refined, and, when no longer profitable, simply discarded).

Two highly related and complementary approaches to deal with stress were suggested by WPP in that report. The first consists of a comprehensive examination of the workplace, its job structure and overall functioning as a social organization to minimize or eliminate those conditions which produce stress.

The most widespread source of frustration and anxiety expressed by mothers in our sample had to do with inflexible short-term leave policies. Measures must be taken to increase the flexibility of parents to attend to unexpected child-related events that often require no more than an hour or two. Frequently penalties are imposed or workers must forego a full day's pay when all they needed was a couple of hours of leave for these kinds of events.

A second major approach to workplace improvement was also proposed based on some of the needs and concerns expressed by parents in these studies. It involves expanding the format and basic operating principles of employee assistance programs to cover services related to the mental and financial health of workers and their families.

The types of assistance proposed here are most critical for single parents, given their relatively limited time and financial resources. They also can be of great importance to dual-earner families and parents and, in many cases, to single and/or childless workers.

b. Recommendation for Schools

There are many ways in which parents can become involved in the education of their children. We found that most parents expressed a desire to be more involved in their children's school activities. They were particularly interested in attending activities in which their children are taking active part. These included plays, band concerts, and field trips. Unfortunately, many of these activities are scheduled during the mothers' work hours.

Several suggestions can be derived from the experiences related by parents in these studies. Because of the diversity among schools and grade levels represented in our sample, these suggestions are couched in general terms, and they do not ignore the fact that some or even many schools as well as individual teachers are already implementing similar measures.

(1) Scheduling of Activities and Special Events

The most obvious suggestion is that schools should schedule more activities during parents' "after-work" hours. However, as was the case for some of the women in our sample, some people work evenings or irregular shifts. There is a need to find a balance between day, evening and weekend activities scheduled by schools. In any case, teachers should expect that some parents will not participate. A

simple reminder to children about the fact that some parents are very busy, or working and unable to attend, would do much to alleviate the guilt many parents feel for not being there, as well as the disappointment or embarrassment often experienced by their children.

(2) Publicity for Upcoming School Events

Several parents stated that if they knew about upcoming events well enough in advance, time off could be requested or arrangements made with co-workers and supervisors to be away for short periods.

(3) School Involvement of Non-custodial Parents

In single-parent families (and in step-parent families as well), the custodial parent is not always the one who is most involved in children's education. Divorce and loss of custody does not necessarily eliminate non-custodial parents from children's lives.

At a minimum, schools should inform non-custodial parents about their children's educational progress. Furthermore, these parents should also be advised about school events.

(4) Homework

Although about 40 percent of the single parent families in our sample reported that sometimes other adults helped their children with homework, it appears that perhaps least 60 percent of these parents do not have any help. Homework can be a constant source of stress and tension in the family.

No unequivocal solution to the homework riddle was suggested by our studies of working parents. However, the issue of homework, its nature and its purpose, is something that must be considered seriously by the education community.

2. Need for Present Work

Near the end of 1983, the Working Parents Project convened a working mini-conference to explore various potential sources of support for working parents identified during the project year. A cross-section of researchers, service providers, and advocates were brought together to examine the most salient concerns with dual-earner and single-parent families, and how different agencies and programs collaborate to develop and implement programs relevant to the needs of working parents whether dual-earner or single-parent families.

The conference participants were selected from each of the six states in SEDL's region. They were requested to (1) be prepared to share with other conferees information about their own efforts, (2) work towards the identification of common needs and concerns, and

(3) help identify potentially successful strategies to address those needs. This also included identifying which role or roles the Working Parents Project as well as the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory could play.

Findings from research conducted in the region were presented by the Family Studies Center of The University of Oklahoma, the Regional Center for Children, Youth, and Families of The University of Texas' Center for Social Work Research, and the Working Parents Project of SEDL. Following these, participants heard presentations about programs and discussed issues and strategies for setting initiatives relevant to working parents and their children at four key institutional levels: (1) employers, (2) schools, (3) community service agencies, and (4) state-level agencies.

The general and specific feedback received by the WPP staff from this excellent cross-section of regional stakeholders served to refine and specify the content of the activities necessary to meet the goals and objectives for the FY 1984 work.

This synthesis and refinement of the suggestion led WPP staff to concentrate upon those issues that affected working parents most directly: (1) the need for quality after school care for their elementary school children, and (2) the need to identify then remove institutional barriers to the involvement of working parents in the education of their children.

After school care continues to be perceived by many school administrators as a non-educational, marginal issue. As such, its potential for delivering safety, tutoring, and enrichment to elementary school children is not widely recognized. Reluctantly, WPP has maintained a secondary interest in and along with an awareness about the current status and development of after school care in schools as a working parents issue. WPP believes that there is great potential for these types of programs to provide an avenue for business involvement, and more generally, community-wide collaboration efforts on behalf of working parents and their children.

In addition to WPP's secondary interest in after school care for elementary school children, the project has concentrated its efforts on formulating a type of school-business collaboration designed to address some of the needs detected in its research with dual-earner and single-parent families. It incorporates components of programs in operation elsewhere in the region and the nation.

The WPP's strategy is to combine in one multi-part, flexible package called Employer-Assisted Parent Involvement in Schools (ESPIS), several components of various programs. These components are designed to meet needs of dual-earner and single parents as identified in our research. Some other components proposed were identified with the help of colleagues from the region who

participated in our September 1983 conference. Other components were identified through information obtained from local projects within our region in addition to projects in other states and other national-level efforts. The search for these additional sources of information has been an integral part of our 1984 activities.

C. PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR FY 1984

These were the original goals and objectives proposed for 1984. They have guided the work during this year and will be used to organize the report that follows for easy reference.

1. Goals and Objectives

a. Goal 1

To translate project research findings into practical recommendations for policies, strategies/guidelines, and programs that families, schools, employers, and other agencies can utilize to increase the capabilities of working parents for participating in the education and care of their children.

Objective 1
To synthesize project findings along with other related research on working families' role in children's education as well as research concerning innovative programs focused on linking working families, schools, and employers.

Objective 2
To identify specific groups, networks, agencies, and organizations within the region that can benefit directly from dissemination of information about project findings, syntheses, and recommendations.

Objective 3
To develop a variety of approaches for presenting project findings and recommendations to schools, employers, and parents.

b. Goal 2

To assist agencies, institutions, organizations, and individuals concerned with enhancing the collaboration between schools, employers, and working parents, by providing up-to-date information about innovative approaches in the area of work, education, and working parents.

Objective 1
To develop and then maintain an up-to-date information base regarding research, programs, agencies, and individuals having an active focus on activities that encourage support for and enhance the participation of working parents in the education of their children.

Objective 2
To develop project capabilities for assisting local and state education agencies, human service organizations, and places of employment in the development of programs, policies, and procedures designed to enable fuller working parents' participation in the education of their children.

Objective 3
To implement the information dissemination plan through one or more alternative methods.

D. MAJOR ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

This section contains a description of major activities, products, and accomplishments to date. Some of the activities described here are either a continuation or a further development of activities that were a minor part of the work performed during the research phases of the project. This report, then, describes the current status of these activities, as well as specific activities and accomplishments that have taken place during FY84.

1. Goal 1. Translating Research Into Practical Recommendations

Three separate objectives had been proposed. The activities, products, and outcomes relating to these objectives are described next.

a. Objective 1. To Synthesize the Various Phases of Research and Other Related Research.

This objective was met by the development of a document that contains comparisons of the data gathered from the dual-earner sample and data gathered from the single-parent families. To compare the findings from the two studies, similar typologies were derived and classifications were made. The two samples were then compared in terms of several employment-related and family-related factors and appropriate statistical analyses were performed. The report also incorporates findings from others' research. In addition, this document contains recommendations directed toward school administrators and personnel, employers, business associations and community groups. This report is titled "Work and Family Interrelationships: Comparisons of Dual-earner and Single-parent Families."

b. Objective 2. To Identify Stakeholders Within the Region Who Could Benefit From our Work.

The activities performed to meet this objective are a continuation of the networking activities that were initiated during 1983.

One set of stakeholders is relatively easy to identify, although

hard to reach. These are the school superintendents that head local education agencies (LEAs) in all six states. We secured an up-to-date mailing list to reach the almost 2,500 LEAs in the region. In addition, we have access to up-to-date education directories from all six states. These directories vary in the amount and type of information they contain. The common elements are the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of top administrators in the central offices and in the various compuses. Some contain information about current enrollment, the number of teachers, etc.

A second set of stakeholders, non-school community organizations and agencies, proved more difficult to secure. The WPP files have been developed and maintained up to date with the assistance of our Advisory Board members, through personal contacts of staff in conferences and professional meetings, and from reference books and other sources. These databases are maintained in the form of an electronic file stored in magnetic disks residing in our word processing equipment.

These files have been created to contain a record of the names of programs, agencies, organizations, and individuals identified as potential stakeholders in the success of dual-earner and single-parent families. There are separate files for each of the six states of the SEDL region, and a selective file on stakeholders from other states and national organizations and agencies.

For each item in the electronic file there is a corresponding manila folder that contains a record of contacts, information, and materials from and/or about that particular organization or individual.

Each state file is classified into three major categories: (a) Working Parents Project Key Contacts, (b) Agencies, Organizations, and Programs, and (c) Individuals.

(a) Working Parents Project Key Contacts.

These are individuals who have an already established working relationship with the Working Parents Project. They include members or past members of SEDL's Board of Directors, members of the Family, School and Community Studies Division's Advisory Board, and participants in a working conference held by the Working Parents Project in September of 1983.

(b) Agencies, Organizations, and Programs.

This file contains those institutional stakeholders with whom the project has corresponded or who have been suggested by other contacts as a potentially useful or interested stakeholder. In this category, only those schools or school districts in which a direct personal or telephone contact has been made are included. The

listing does not include the list of 2,500 school superintendents who were sent a copy of the Executive Summary of the 1983 research findings and recommendations.

(c) Individuals.

This file contains the names of individual researchers or practitioners who have requested information or materials about the project; this includes of some university faculty members and others.

c. Objective 3. To Develop a Variety of Approaches for Presenting Project Findings and Recommendations to Various Stakeholder Groups

This objective has been met by the development of three major documents designed for dissemination purposes. The first one is in the form of the Testimony that the Working Parents Project presented at the Hearing of the Prevention Strategies Task Force of the House Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families. It was held Washington, D.C. on June 7, 1984. The document, entitled "Involving Deal-earner and Single Working Parent Families in the Education of Their Children: Some Recommendations for Action," summarizes selected findings from our previous research, and presents our general recommendations to schools and employers. In that document, the basic strategy of our "Employer-Assisted Parental Involvement in Schools" program, (ESPIS) is developed. The text of the Testimony is scheduled for publication by the House Select Committee in December of 1984. Only a limited number of copies of the document submitted were distributed.

The second document, entitled "Dual-earner, Single Working Parent Families and Education: Recommendations for School-Business Collaboration," contains a more refined description of our proposed strategy for increasing the involvement of working parents in the education of their children. This document has been disseminated to about 200 selected community organizations, including business organizations and other social service providers in large, medium and small cities throughout the six states.

Finally, a comprehensive summary of the major findings, including some additional analyses, and the general and specific recommendations offered by the project are contained in the document described under Objective 1. In addition to these documents, WPP staff has tailored the basic findings and recommendations for presentations to a variety of audiences, both in the region and in national forums. Detail of these dissemination activities and audiences are presented in the discussion of Goal 2, Objective 3.

2. Goal 2. To Assist Other Agencies, Institutions, and Organizations to Enhance Collaborative Efforts

Three separate objectives were envisioned to meet this goal.

The activities, products, and outcomes are described in the following paragraphs.

a. Objective 1. To Develop and Maintain an Up-To-Date Database Regarding Research and Programs Directed to Working Parents

In order to meet this objective, it was necessary for the project to acquire and store for its internal use not only research literature, but also information about agencies, organizations, programs and individuals engaged in activities relevant to the success of dual-earner and single-parent families and their children. The databases developed include not only information and contacts with stakeholders in the six states of the SEDL region, but also contacts with other organizations and agencies in the other states and many others more national in scope. In addition to these databases, the staff has collected clippings from local newspapers as indications of interest and concerns present in the Austin community.

b. Objective 2. To Develop Project's Capability to Serve As A Resource to Stakeholders in The Region

In order to meet this objective, the WPP collected, read, and made notes about the materials that were acquired, either through purchase, personal subscription to professional journal, or materials obtained from the State Library, City Library, and from the University of Texas Perry-Castaneda Library.

In addition to these readings, the WPP staff participated in the following organized activities:

(1) In-house Staff Development Workshop

During 1984, staff attended an in-house two-day workshop on "Improving Communications Skills." Presented by an outside professional consulting firm, the workshop was designed to diagnose each individual's communications strategies, to review oral presentation styles, and to provide feedback and teach oral communication skills and concepts.

(2) Conference Participation

Project staff members participated in numerous conferences and meetings, in the great majority of cases in the dual roles of presenters and participants/conferees. The complete list of those is reported elsewhere in the section on dissemination activities. Here, four major meetings of national scope, two by professional organizations and two invitational meetings of national scope, are mentioned, because although the staff were not formal presenters, they were either active participants or had been invited to serve as a resource. Both professional association conferences included pre-conference workshops, seminars, and sessions on topics of

specific project interest as well as general professional development in such areas as methodology, theory, policy issues, etc.

(a) The 1984 Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), held in New Orleans, Louisiana in April.

(b) The 1984 Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association (ASA), held in San Antonio, Texas, in September.

(c) Renato Espinoza, the Senior Researcher of the Working Parents Project, was elected to the Work and Family Research Council of the Conference Board, Inc. of New York.

(d) Renato Espinoza was invited by the Center for Early Adolescence of the University of North Carolina, with support from the Johnson Foundation, to an invitational, working conference at the Wingspread Conference Center, home base of the Johnson Foundation in Racine, Wisconsin. The conference, with the title "3:00 to 6:00 p.m.: Setting Policy for Young Adolescents in the After-School Hours," was held November 11-13, 1984.

(3) Project Consultants and Other Resources

During the course of 1984, the Working Parents Project has identified a number of individuals in each of the six states to serve as outside consultants and resource persons. These individuals are a cross-section of professionals engaged in research, program development, provision of social services, education, and advocacy on behalf of children and working parents. A total of five individuals have been identified in Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico, and Oklahoma. A total of 11 additional individuals have been identified in Texas, most of them residents of Austin, WPP's headquarters.

c. Objective 3. Conduct Dissemination Activities

The dissemination of our research findings and recommendations has been the central activity of this period. The major activities can be classified in terms of their format and major target audiences.

Three major documents have been prepared and used for this dissemination function, and they have been used either as handouts at meetings and presentations or in direct mailings, either initiated by the project, or as a response to inquiries and requests for information. These are (1) "Work and Family Life Among Anglo, Black, and Mexican American Single Parent Families: Executive Summary of the Working Parents Project 1983 Final Report," (2) "Involving Dual-earner and Single-parent Families in the Education of Their Children: Some Recommendations for Action," Testimony

presented at the hearing of the Prevention Strategies Task Force of the Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families on "Improving American Education: Roles for Parents," held in Washington, D.C. on June 7, 1984 and scheduled for publication in December, 1984, and (3) "Dual-earner and Single-parent Families and Education: Some Recommendations for School-Business Collaboration."

The specific dissemination events include:

(a) General Mass Dissemination:

- Write-up in Americal Family, Vol. VII, No. 2, February 1984.
- Article in USA Today, April 26, 1984 issue, by Sally Stewart.
- Mention on the NBC Nightly News, national network broadcast, April 26, 1984.
- Article in The Washington Post, April 27, 1984 issue, by Judy Mann.
- Write-up in Education Daily, April 27, p. 4.
- Write-up in Education USA, May 7, 1984.
- Article in School-Age Child Care Newsletter, Vol. 2, No. 2, Fall of 1984.
- Nancy Naron was featured co-interviewee on Focus on Education, half-an-hour television program broadcast to South Texas Coast region, Station KRIS, Corpus Christi, November 16, 1984.

(b) Conference Presentations:

The following presentations were made by WPP staff. The information provided here includes dates, title of presentation, name of conference or forum, city and state where it was held, and types of participants or target audiences reached directly.

- April 5, 1984. "Divorced Working Mothers' Involvement in the Education of their School-age Children: The Role of Ex-spousal Support and the Mother's Social Support Network." 1984 Annual Conference of the Texas Council on Family Relations, Abilene, Texas. Participants included marriage counselors, family therapists, community family service providers, researchers, and students, mostly from Texas, but including some from New Mexico and Oklahoma.

- April 27, 1984. "Working Parents Project: Findings and Recommendations." National Conference on "Working Parents and Achieving Children: The Road to Excellence." Home School Institute, Washington, D.C. Participants included a national cross-section of educators and educational researchers, family professions, program administrators, legislative staff, Department of Education staff, parents, students, advocates, and members of the press, both local

to Washington, D.C., national press, and national education press services.

- May 17, 1984. "Work and Family Research: Implications for Latchkey Children." When School's Out and Nobody's Home: The First National Conference on Latchkey Children, Boston, Massachusetts. Participants included a national cross-section of researchers, program developers, representatives of the business sector, legislators and legislative staff, educators, parents, and students.

- June 7, 1984. "Involving Dual-earner and Single Working Parent Families in the Education of their Children: Some Recommendations for Action." Hearing of the Prevention Strategies Task Force of the House Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families, Washington, D.C. Participants providing testimony, in addition to the Working Parents Project, included a cross-section of researchers, program developers, educators, parents and children from six states and the District of Columbia, in addition to the legislators, legislative staff, and members of the national press.

- July 16, 1984. "Working Parents, their Employers, and the Schools: Some Strategies for Mutual Collaboration." At "Texas Public Schools--A Rising Tide of Excellence." 1984 Superintendent's Workshop for Educational Leaders, Austin, Texas. Participants included school superintendents, other central office staff, and teachers from Texas.

- July 30, 1984. "Involving Working Parents in the Schools: Some Barriers in the Workplace, the School, and the Community." At Parents, Teachers, and Administrators Teaming for Excellence Conference, Ruston, Louisiana. Participants included State Department of Education staff, university researchers, teachers, administrators, and parents from Louisiana.

- August 26, 1984. "Workplaces, Schools, and Families: Studies of Parents' Participation in the Education of their Children." The Society for the Study of Social Problems 34th Annual Meeting, San Antonio, Texas. Participants included a national cross-section of sociologists and other social scientists, along with program developers and educators.

- October 19, 1984. "Policies and Program Developments Affecting the Work/Family Balance: Helping New Era Families Cope." National Council on Family Relations Annual Meeting, San Francisco, California. Participants included a national cross-section of researchers, marriage counselors, family therapists, social workers, community

family service providers, family life educators, parent education specialists, educators and students of various disciplines.

(c) Targeted Dissemination-Regional Audiences

In addition to the activities mentioned above, two major direct mail activities have been undertaken during this year:

1) Direct mailing of "Work and Family Life among Anglo, Black, and Mexican American Single-Parent Families: Executive Summary of the Working Parents Project 1983 Annual Report" to over 2,500 District Superintendents in each of the six states of the SEDL region, and

2) Direct mailing of "Dual-earner and Single Parent Families and Education: Some Recommendations for School-Business Collaboration," mailed to approximately 200 business and community organizations and agencies in various cities throughout the six states of the SEDL region.

E. CONCLUSIONS

In the course of the work performed during FY84, the stated goals for the project have been met. Three separate documents have been developed and used to serve various needs of the project's dissemination activities during 1984.

The reactions of various audiences to our research findings indicate that our attention to the workplace and its culture is an important contribution to our knowledge of the complex social interactions in which adults engage. Furthermore, our general recommendations for changes in school and workplace practices and policies to accommodate the special needs of working parents, single parents, and their children, are indeed timely.

Congressional hearings and national conferences have been held during this year dealing with working parents and their children, with the latchkey problem, and with after-school care and supervision of early adolescents. In all of these national forums our project has been present and visible. A great deal of interest has been expressed about our work, and in particular to our suggestion that employers can play a vital role in supporting and facilitating the involvement of parents in the education of their own children. This appears to be a truly original and timely contribution to the search for additional ways to improve both children's education and to achieve the empowerment of parents.

It is clear now that we need to go beyond the general recommendations offered. The path chosen has been articulated in our proposal for a new form of business-school collaboration: the Employer-Supported Parental Involvement in Schools (ESPIS). This

strategy has been formulated in its essential elements and shared with a cross-section of school districts and community organizations, in particular chambers of commerce in cities of various sizes. Our efforts for FY85 will be directed at promoting the implementation of ESPIS by one or more school districts, and to use information obtained from that experience to develop detailed "how-to guides" to help implement the model in other locations around the region.

This activity would complete the full cycle that started with research, continued with development, implementation, refinement, and finally would lead to a product--an educational innovation that can be exported, adopted and/or adapted to fit the particular circumstances of a given community.

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